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EVER
WATCHFUL
SIR GEORGE WHITE
BARONET

EVER
SIR GEORGE W
BARONET

THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

LORD MACAULAY

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOL. IX

THE WORKS OF LORD MACAULAY

ESSAYS AND BIOGRAPHIES VOL. III

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1898

THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

From the original painting by Sir John Everett Millais, P.R.A., the property of the Earl of Rosebery, K.G.

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ESSAYS AND BIOGRAPHIES VOL. III

ALBANY EDITION

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THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE . . . . . *Frontispiece*
From the original painting by Sir John Everett Millais, P.R.A., the property of the Earl of Rosebery, K.G.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE . . . . . *To face p.* 92
From the original painting by Sir Peter Lely in the National Portrait Gallery.

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From the original painting by Tilly Kettle in the National Portrait Gallery.

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

CONTRIBUTED TO

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE. (OCTOBER, 1838.)

Memoirs of the Life, Works, and Correspondence of Sir William Temple. By the Right Hon. THOMAS PEREGRINE COURTENAY. 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1836.

MR. COURTENAY has long been well known to politicians as an industrious and useful official man, and as an upright and consistent member of Parliament. He has been one of the most moderate, and, at the same time, one of the least pliant members of the Conservative party. His conduct has, indeed, on some questions, been so Whiggish, that both those who applauded and those who condemned it have questioned his claim to be considered as a Tory. But his Toryism, such as it is, he has held fast through all changes of fortune and fashion; and he has at last retired from public life, leaving behind him, to the best of our belief, no personal enemy, and carrying with him the respect and good will of many who strongly dissent from his opinions.

This book, the fruit of Mr. Courtenay's leisure, is introduced by a preface in which he informs us that

the assistance furnished to him from various quarters "has taught him the superiority of literature to politics for developing the kindlier feelings, and conducing to an agreeable life." We are truly glad that Mr. Courtenay is so well satisfied with his new employment, and we heartily congratulate him on having been driven by events to make an exchange which, advantageous as it is, few people make while they can avoid it. He has little reason, in our opinion, to envy any of those who are still engaged in a pursuit from which, at most, they can only expect that, by relinquishing liberal studies and social pleasures, by passing nights without sleep and summers without one glimpse of the beauty of nature, they may attain that laborious, that invidious, that closely watched slavery which is mocked with the name of power.

The volumes before us are fairly entitled to the praise of diligence, care, good sense, and impartiality; and these qualities are sufficient to make a book valuable, but not quite sufficient to make it readable. Mr. Courtenay has not sufficiently studied the arts of selection and compression. The information with which he furnishes us must still, we apprehend, be considered as so much raw material. To manufacturers it will be highly useful; but it is not yet in such a form that it can be enjoyed by the idle consumer. To drop metaphor, we are afraid that this work will be less acceptable to those who read for the sake of reading, than to those who read in order to write.

We cannot help adding, though we are extremely unwilling to quarrel with Mr. Courtenay about politics, that the book would not be at all the worse if it contained fewer snarls against the Whigs of the present day. Not only are these passages out of place in a historical work, but some of them are intrinsically such that they would become the editor of a third-rate party newspaper better than a gentleman of Mr.

Courtenay's talents and knowledge. For example, we are told that "it is a remarkable circumstance, familiar to those who are acquainted with history, but suppressed by the new Whigs, that the liberal politicians of the seventeenth century and the greater part of the eighteenth, never extended their liberality to the native Irish, or the professors of the ancient religion." What schoolboy of fourteen is ignorant of this remarkable circumstance? What Whig, new or old, was ever such an idiot as to think that it could be suppressed? Really we might as well say that it is a remarkable circumstance, familiar to people well read in history, but carefully suppressed by the Clergy of the Established Church, that in the fifteenth century England was in communion with Rome. We are tempted to make some remarks on another passage, which seems to be the peroration of a speech intended to have been spoken against the Reform Bill: but we forbear.

We doubt whether it will be found that the memory of Sir William Temple owes much to Mr. Courtenay's researches. Temple is one of those men whom the world has agreed to praise highly without knowing much about them, and who are therefore more likely to lose than to gain by a close examination. Yet he is not without fair pretensions to the most honourable place among the statesmen of his time. A few of them equalled or surpassed him in talents; but they were men of no good repute for honesty. A few may be named whose patriotism was purer, nobler, and more disinterested than his; but they were men of no eminent ability. Morally, he was above Shaftesbury; intellectually, he was above Russell.

To say of a man that he occupied a high position in times of misgovernment, of corruption, of civil and religious faction, that nevertheless he contracted no great stain and bore no part in any great crime,

that he won the esteem of a profligate Court and of a turbulent people, without being guilty of any disgraceful subserviency to either, seems to be very high praise; and all this may with truth be said of Temple.

Yet Temple is not a man to our taste. A temper not naturally good, but under strict command; a constant regard to decorum; a rare caution in playing that mixed game of skill and hazard, human life; a disposition to be content with small and certain winnings rather than to go on doubling the stake; these seem to us to be the most remarkable features of his character. This sort of moderation, when united, as in him it was, with very considerable abilities, is, under ordinary circumstances, scarcely to be distinguished from the highest and purest integrity, and yet may be perfectly compatible with laxity of principle, with coldness of heart, and with the most intense selfishness. Temple, we fear, had not sufficient warmth and elevation of sentiment to deserve the name of a virtuous man. He did not betray or oppress his country: nay, he rendered considerable services to her; but he risked nothing for her. No temptation which either the King or the Opposition could hold out ever induced him to come forward as the supporter either of arbitrary or of factious measures. But he was most careful not to give offence by strenuously opposing such measures. He never put himself prominently before the public eye, except at conjunctures when he was almost certain to gain, and could not possibly lose, at conjunctures when the interest of the State, the views of the Court, and the passions of the multitude, all appeared for an instant to coincide. By judiciously availing himself of several of these rare moments, he succeeded in establishing a high character for wisdom and patriotism. When the favourable crisis was passed, he never risked the reputation which he had won. He avoided the great offices

of State with a caution almost pusillanimous, and confined himself to quiet and secluded departments of public business, in which he could enjoy moderate but certain advantages without incurring envy. If the circumstances of the country became such that it was impossible to take any part in politics without some danger, he retired to his library and his orchard, and, while the nation groaned under oppression, or resounded with tumult and with the din of civil arms, amused himself by writing memoirs and tying up apricots. His political career bore some resemblance to the military career of Louis the Fourteenth. Louis, lest his royal dignity should be compromised by failure, never repaired to a siege, till it had been reported to him by the most skilful officers in his service, that nothing could prevent the fall of the place. When this was ascertained, the monarch, in his helmet and cuirass, appeared among the tents, held councils of war, dictated the capitulation, received the keys, and then returned to Versailles to hear his flatterers repeat that Turenne had been beaten at Mariendal, that Condé had been forced to raise the siege of Arras, and that the only warrior whose glory had never been obscured by a single check was Louis the Great. Yet Condé and Turenne will always be considered as captains of a very different order from the invincible Louis; and we must own that many statesmen who have committed great faults, appear to us to be deserving of more esteem than the faultless Temple. For in truth his faultlessness is chiefly to be ascribed to his extreme dread of all responsibility, to his determination rather to leave his country in a scrape than to run any chance of being in a scrape himself. He seems to have been averse from danger; and it must be admitted that the dangers to which a public man was exposed, in those days of conflicting tyranny and sedition, were of the most serious kind. He could

not bear discomfort, bodily or mental. His lamentations when, in the course of his diplomatic journies, he was put a little out of his way, and forced, in the vulgar phrase, to rough it, are quite amusing. He talks of riding a day or two on a bad Westphalian road, of sleeping on straw for one night, of travelling in winter when the snow lay on the ground, as if he had gone on an expedition to the North Pole or to the source of the Nile. This kind of valetudinarian effeminacy, this habit of coddling himself, appears in all parts of his conduct. He loved fame, but not with the love of an exalted and generous mind. He loved it as an end, not at all as a means; as a personal luxury, not at all as an instrument of advantage to others. He scraped it together and treasured it up with a timid and niggardly thrift; and never employed the hoard in any enterprise, however virtuous and useful, in which there was hazard of losing one particle. No wonder if such a person did little or nothing which deserves positive blame. But much more than this may justly be demanded of a man possessed of such abilities, and placed in such a situation. Had Temple been brought before Dante's infernal tribunal, he would not have been condemned to the deeper recesses of the abyss. He would not have been boiled with Dundee in the crimson pool of Bulicame, or hurled with Danby into the seething pitch of Malebolge, or congealed with Churchill in the eternal ice of Giudecca; but he would perhaps have been placed in the dark vestibule next to the shade of that inglorious pontiff—

"Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto."

Of course a man is not bound to be a politician any more than he is bound to be a soldier; and there are perfectly honourable ways of quitting both politics and the military profession. But neither in the one

way of life, nor in the other, is any man entitled to take all the sweet and leave all the sour. A man who belongs to the army only in time of peace, who appears at reviews in Hyde Park, escorts the Sovereign with the utmost valour and fidelity to and from the House of Lords, and retires as soon as he thinks it likely that he may be ordered on an expedition, is justly thought to have disgraced himself. Some portion of the censure due to such a holiday-soldier may justly fall on the mere holiday-politician, who flinches from his duties as soon as those duties become difficult and disagreeable, that is to say, as soon as it becomes peculiarly important that he should resolutely perform them.

But though we are far indeed from considering Temple as a perfect statesman, though we place him below many statesmen who have committed very great errors, we cannot deny that, when compared with his contemporaries, he makes a highly respectable appearance. The reaction which followed the victory of the popular party over Charles the First, had produced a hurtful effect on the national character; and this effect was most discernible in the classes and in the places which had been most strongly excited by the recent revolution. The deterioration was greater in London than in the country, and was greatest of all in the courtly and official circles. Almost all that remained of what had been good and noble in the Cavaliers and Roundheads of 1642, was now to be found in the middling orders. The principles and feelings which prompted the Grand Remonstrance were still strong among the sturdy yeomen, and the decent God-fearing merchants. The spirit of Derby and Capel still glowed in many sequestered manor-houses; but among those political leaders who, at the time of the Restoration, were still young or in the vigour of manhood, there was neither a South-

ampton nor a Vane, neither a Falkland nor a Hampden. The pure, fervent, and constant loyalty which, in the preceding reign, had remained unshaken on fields of disastrous battle, in foreign garrets and cellars, and at the bar of the High Court of Justice, was scarcely to be found among the rising courtiers. As little, or still less, could the new chiefs of parties lay claim to the great qualities of the statesmen who had stood at the head of the Long Parliament. Hampden, Pym, Vane, Cromwell, are discriminated from the ablest politicians of the succeeding generation, by all the strong lineaments which distinguish the men who produce revolutions from the men whom revolutions produce. The leader in a great change, the man who stirs up a reposing community, and overthrows a deeply-rooted system, may be a very depraved man; but he can scarcely be destitute of some moral qualities which extort even from enemies a reluctant admiration, fixedness of purpose, intensity of will, enthusiasm, which is not the less fierce or persevering because it is sometimes disguised under the semblance of composure, and which bears down before it the force of circumstances and the opposition of reluctant minds. These qualities, variously combined with all sorts of virtues and vices, may be found, we think, in most of the authors of great civil and religious movements, in Cæsar, in Mahomet, in Hildebrand, in Dominic, in Luther, in Robespierre; and these qualities were found, in no scanty measure, among the chiefs of the party which opposed Charles the First. The character of the men whose minds are formed in the midst of the confusion which follows a great revolution is generally very different. Heat, the natural philosophers tell us, produces rarefaction of the air; and rarefaction of the air produces cold. So zeal makes revolutions; and revolutions make men zealous for nothing. The politicians of whom we

speak, whatever may be their natural capacity or courage, are almost always characterised by a peculiar levity, a peculiar inconstancy, an easy, apathetic way of looking at the most solemn questions, a willingness to leave the direction of their course to fortune and popular opinion, a notion that one public cause is nearly as good as another, and a firm conviction that it is much better to be the hireling of the worst cause than to be a martyr to the best.

This was most strikingly the case with the English statesmen of the generation which followed the Restoration. They had neither the enthusiasm of the Cavalier nor the enthusiasm of the Republican. They had been early emancipated from the dominion of old usages and feelings; yet they had not acquired a strong passion for innovation. Accustomed to see old establishments shaking, falling, lying in ruins all around them, accustomed to live under a succession of constitutions of which the average duration was about a twelvemonth, they had no religious reverence for prescription, nothing of that frame of mind which naturally springs from the habitual contemplation of immemorial antiquity and immovable stability. Accustomed, on the other hand, to see change after change welcomed with eager hope and ending in disappointment, to see shame and confusion of face follow the extravagant hopes and predictions of rash and fanatical innovators, they had learned to look on professions of public spirit, and on schemes of reform, with distrust and contempt. They sometimes talked the language of devoted subjects, sometimes that of ardent lovers of their country. But their secret creed seems to have been, that loyalty was one great delusion, and patriotism another. If they really entertained any predilection for the monarchical or for the popular part of the constitution, for episcopacy or for presbyterianism, that predilection was feeble and languid,

and instead of overcoming, as in the times of their fathers, the dread of exile, confiscation, and death, was rarely of power to resist the slightest impulse of selfish ambition or of selfish fear. Such was the texture of the presbyterianism of Lauderdale, and of the speculative republicanism of Halifax. The sense of political honour seemed to be extinct. With the great mass of mankind, the test of integrity in a public man is consistency. This test, though very defective, is perhaps the best that any, except very acute or very near observers, are capable of applying; and does undoubtedly enable the people to form an estimate of the characters of the great, which, on the whole, approximates to correctness. But during the latter part of the seventeenth century, inconsistency had necessarily ceased to be a disgrace; and a man was no more taunted with it, than he is taunted with being black at Timbuctoo. Nobody was ashamed of avowing what was common between him and the whole nation. In the short space of about seven years, the supreme power had been held by the Long Parliament, by a Council of Officers, by Barebones' Parliament, by a Council of Officers again, by a Protector according to the Instrument of Government, by a Protector according to the Humble Petition and Advice, by the Long Parliament again, by a third Council of Officers, by the Long Parliament a third time, by the Convention, and by the King. In such times consistency is so inconvenient to a man who affects it, and to all who are connected with him, that it ceases to be regarded as a virtue, and is considered as impracticable obstinacy and idle scrupulosity. Indeed, in such times, a good citizen may be bound in duty to serve a succession of Governments. Blake did so in one profession and Hale in another; and the conduct of both has been approved by posterity. But it is clear that when inconsistency with respect to the

most important public questions has ceased to be a reproach, inconsistency with respect to questions of minor importance is not likely to be regarded as dishonourable. In a country in which many very honest people had, within the space of a few months, supported the government of the Protector, that of the Rump, and that of the King, a man was not likely to be ashamed of abandoning his party for a place, or of voting for a bill which he had opposed.

The public men of the times which followed the Restoration were by no means deficient in courage or ability; and some kinds of talent appear to have been developed amongst them to a remarkable, we might almost say, to a morbid and unnatural degree. Neither Theramenes in ancient, nor Talleyrand in modern times, had a finer perception of all the peculiarities of character, and of all the indications of coming change, than some of our countrymen in that age. Their power of reading things of high import, in signs which to others were invisible or unintelligible, resembled magic. But the curse of Reuben was upon them all: "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

This character is susceptible of innumerable modifications, according to the innumerable varieties of intellect and temper in which it may be found. Men of unquiet minds and violent ambition followed a fearfully eccentric course, darted wildly from one extreme to another, served and betrayed all parties in turn, showed their unblushing foreheads alternately in the van of the most corrupt administrations and of the most factious oppositions, were privy to the most guilty mysteries, first of the Cabal, and then of the Rye-House Plot, abjured their religion to win their sovereign's favour while they were secretly planning his overthrow, shrived themselves to Jesuits with letters in cipher from the Prince of Orange in their pockets, corresponded with the Hague whilst in office

under James, and began to correspond with St. Germains as soon as they had kissed hands for office under William. But Temple was not one of these. He was not destitute of ambition. But his was not one of those souls in which unsatisfied ambition anticipates the tortures of hell, gnaws like the worm which dieth not, and burns like the fire which is not quenched. His principle was to make sure of safety and comfort, and to let greatness come if it would. It came: he enjoyed it: and, in the very first moment in which it could no longer be enjoyed without danger and vexation, he contentedly let it go. He was not exempt, we think, from the prevailing political immorality. His mind took the contagion, but took it *ad modum recipientis*, in a form so mild that an undiscerning judge might doubt whether it were indeed the same fierce pestilence that was raging all around. The malady partook of the constitutional languor of the patient. The general corruption, mitigated by his calm and unadventurous temperament, showed itself in omissions and desertions, not in positive crimes; and his inactivity, though sometimes timorous and selfish, becomes respectable when compared with the malevolent and perfidious restlessness of Shaftesbury and Sunderland.

Temple sprang from a family which, though ancient and honourable, had, before his time, been scarcely mentioned in our history, but which, long after his death, produced so many eminent men, and formed such distinguished alliances, that it exercised, in a regular and constitutional manner, an influence in the state scarcely inferior to that which, in widely different times, and by widely different arts, the house of Neville attained in England, and that of Douglas in Scotland. During the latter years of George the Second, and through the whole reign of George the Third, members of that widely spread and powerful

connexion were almost constantly at the head either of the Government or of the Opposition. There were times when the cousinhood, as it was once nicknamed, would of itself have furnished almost all the materials necessary for the construction of an efficient Cabinet. Within the space of fifty years, three First Lords of the Treasury, three Secretaries of State, two Keepers of the Privy Seal, and four First Lords of the Admiralty were appointed from among the sons and grandsons of the Countess Temple.

So splendid have been the fortunes of the main stock of the Temple family, continued by female succession. William Temple, the first of the line who attained to any great historical eminence, was of a younger branch. His father, Sir John Temple, was Master of the Rolls in Ireland, and distinguished himself among the Privy Councillors of that kingdom by the zeal with which, at the commencement of the struggle between the Crown and the Long Parliament, he supported the popular cause. He was arrested by order of the Duke of Ormond, but regained his liberty by an exchange, repaired to England, and there sate in the House of Commons as burgess for Chichester. He attached himself to the Presbyterian party, and was one of those moderate members who, at the close of the year 1648, voted for treating with Charles on the basis to which that Prince had himself agreed, and who were, in consequence, turned out of the House, with small ceremony, by Colonel Pride. Sir John seems, however, to have made his peace with the victorious Independents; for, in 1653, he resumed his office in Ireland.

Sir John Temple was married to a sister of the celebrated Henry Hammond, a learned and pious divine, who took the side of the King with very conspicuous zeal during the civil war, and was deprived of his preferment in the church after the victory of

the Parliament. On account of the loss which Hammond sustained on this occasion, he has the honour of being designated, in the cant of that new brood of Oxonian sectaries who unite the worst parts of the Jesuit to the worst parts of the Orangeman, as Hammond, Presbyter, Doctor, and Confessor.

William Temple, Sir John's eldest son, was born in London in the year 1628. He received his early education under his maternal uncle, was subsequently sent to school at Bishop-Stortford, and, at seventeen, began to reside at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where the celebrated Cudworth was his tutor. The times were not favourable to study. The Civil War disturbed even the quiet cloisters and bowling-greens of Cambridge, produced violent revolutions in the government and discipline of the colleges, and unsettled the minds of the students. Temple forgot at Emmanuel all the little Greek which he had brought from Bishop-Stortford, and never retrieved the loss; a circumstance which would hardly be worth noticing but for the almost incredible fact that fifty years later, he was so absurd as to set up his own authority against that of Bentley on questions of Greek history and philology. He made no proficiency either in the old philosophy which still lingered in the schools of Cambridge, or in the new philosophy of which Lord Bacon was the founder. But to the end of his life he continued to speak of the former with ignorant admiration, and of the latter with equally ignorant contempt.

After residing at Cambridge two years, he departed without taking a degree, and set out upon his travels. He seems to have been then a lively, agreeable young man of fashion, not by any means deeply read, but versed in all the superficial accomplishments of a gentleman, and acceptable in all polite societies. In politics he professed himself a Royalist.

His opinions on religious subjects seem to have been such as might be expected from a young man of quick parts, who had received a rambling education, who had not thought deeply, who had been disgusted by the morose austerity of the Puritans, and who, surrounded from childhood by the hubbub of conflicting sects, might easily learn to feel an impartial contempt for them all.

On his road to France he fell in with the son and daughter of Sir Peter Osborne. Sir Peter held Guernsey for the King, and the young people were, like their father, warm for the royal cause. At an inn where they stopped in the Isle of Wight, the brother amused himself with inscribing on the windows his opinion of the ruling powers. For this instance of malignancy the whole party were arrested, and brought before the governor. The sister, trusting to the tenderness which, even in those troubled times, scarcely any gentleman of any party ever failed to show where a woman was concerned, took the crime on herself, and was immediately set at liberty with her fellow-travellers.

This incident, as was natural, made a deep impression on Temple. He was only twenty. Dorothy Osborne was twenty-one. She is said to have been handsome; and there remains abundant proof that she possessed an ample share of the dexterity, the vivacity, and the tenderness of her sex. Temple soon became, in the phrase of that time, her servant, and she returned his regard. But difficulties, as great as ever expanded a novel to the fifth volume, opposed their wishes. When the courtship commenced, the father of the hero was sitting in the Long Parliament; the father of the heroine was commanding in Guernsey for King Charles. Even when the war ended, and Sir Peter Osborne returned to his seat at Chicksands, the prospects of the lovers were scarcely

less gloomy. Sir John Temple had a more advantageous alliance in view for his son. Dorothy Osborne was in the meantime besieged by as many suitors as were drawn to Belmont by the fame of Portia. The most distinguished on the list was Henry Cromwell. Destitute of the capacity, the energy, the magnanimity of his illustrious father, destitute also of the meek and placid virtues of his elder brother, this young man was perhaps a more formidable rival in love than either of them would have been. Mrs. Hutchinson, speaking the sentiments of the grave and aged, describes him as an "insolent foole," and a "debauched ungodly cavalier." These expressions probably mean that he was one who, among young and dissipated people, would pass for a fine gentleman. Dorothy was fond of dogs of large and more formidable breed than those which lie on modern hearth-rugs; and Henry Cromwell promised that the highest functionaries at Dublin should be set to work to procure her a fine Irish greyhound. She seems to have felt his attentions as very flattering, though his father was then only Lord-General, and not yet Protector. Love, however, triumphed over ambition, and the young lady appears never to have regretted her decision; though, in a letter written just at the time when all England was ringing with the news of the violent dissolution of the Long Parliament, she could not refrain from reminding Temple, with pardonable vanity, "how great she might have been, if she had been so wise as to have taken hold of the offer of H. C."

Nor was it only the influence of rivals that Temple had to dread. The relations of his mistress regarded him with personal dislike, and spoke of him as an unprincipled adventurer, without honour or religion, ready to render service to any party for the sake of preferment. This is, indeed, a very distorted view of

Temple's character. Yet a character, even in the most distorted view taken of it by the most angry and prejudiced minds, generally retains something of its outline. No caricaturist ever represented Mr. Pitt as a Falstaff, or Mr. Fox as a skeleton; nor did any libeller ever impute parsimony to Sheridan, or profusion to Marlborough. It must be allowed that the turn of mind which the eulogists of Temple have dignified with the appellation of philosophical indifference, and which, however becoming it may be in an old and experienced statesman, has a somewhat ungraceful appearance in youth, might easily appear shocking to a family who were ready to fight or to suffer martyrdom for their exiled King and their persecuted church. The poor girl was exceedingly hurt and irritated by these imputations on her lover, defended him warmly behind his back, and addressed to himself some very tender and anxious admonitions, mingled with assurances of her confidence in his honour and virtue. On one occasion she was most highly provoked by the way in which one of her brothers spoke of Temple. "We talked ourselves weary," she says; "he renounced me, and I defied him."

Near seven years did this arduous wooing continue. We are not accurately informed respecting Temple's movements during that time. But he seems to have led a rambling life, sometimes on the Continent, sometimes in Ireland, sometimes in London. He made himself master of the French and Spanish languages, and amused himself by writing essays and romances, an employment which at least served the purpose of forming his style. The specimen which Mr. Courtenay has preserved of these early compositions is by no means contemptible: indeed, there is one passage on Like and Dislike which could have been produced only by a mind habituated carefully

to reflect on its own operations, and which reminds us of the best things in Montaigne.

Temple appears to have kept up a very active correspondence with his mistress. His letters are lost, but hers have been preserved; and many of them appear in these volumes. Mr. Courtenay expresses some doubt whether his readers will think him justified in inserting so large a number of these epistles. We only wish that there were twice as many. Very little indeed of the diplomatic correspondence of that generation is so well worth reading. There is a vile phrase of which bad historians are exceedingly fond, "the dignity of history." One writer is in possession of some anecdotes which would illustrate most strikingly the operation of the Mississippi scheme on the manners and morals of the Parisians. But he suppresses those anecdotes, because they are too low for the dignity of history. Another is strongly tempted to mention some facts indicating the horrible state of the prisons of England two hundred years ago. But he hardly thinks that the sufferings of a dozen felons, pigging together on bare bricks in a hole fifteen feet square, would form a subject suited to the dignity of history. Another, from respect for the dignity of history, publishes an account of the reign of George the Second, without ever mentioning Whitefield's preaching in Moorfields. How should a writer, who can talk about senates, and congresses of sovereigns, and pragmatic sanctions, and ravelines, and counterscarps, and battles where ten thousand men are killed, and six thousand men with fifty stand of colours and eighty guns taken, stoop to the Stock-Exchange, to Newgate, to the theatre, to the tabernacle?

Tragedy has its dignity as well as history; and how much the tragic art has owed to that dignity any man may judge who will compare the majestic

Alexandrines in which the Seigneur Oreste and Madame Andromaque utter their complaints, with the chattering of the fool in Lear and of the nurse in Romeo and Juliet.

That a historian should not record trifles, that he should confine himself to what is important, is perfectly true. But many writers seem never to have considered on what the historical importance of an event depends. They seem not to be aware that the importance of a fact, when that fact is considered with reference to its immediate effects, and the importance of the same fact, when that fact is considered as part of the materials for the construction of a science, are two very different things. The quantity of good or evil which a transaction produces is by no means necessarily proportioned to the quantity of light which that transaction affords, as to the way in which good or evil may hereafter be produced. The poisoning of an emperor is in one sense a far more serious matter than the poisoning of a rat. But the poisoning of a rat may be an era in chemistry; and an emperor may be poisoned by such ordinary means, and with such ordinary symptoms, that no scientific journal would notice the occurrence. An action for a hundred thousand pounds is in one sense a more momentous affair than an action for fifty pounds. But it by no means follows that the learned gentlemen who report the proceedings of the courts of law ought to give a fuller account of an action for a hundred thousand pounds, than of an action for fifty pounds. For a cause in which a large sum is at stake may be important only to the particular plaintiff and the particular defendant. A cause, on the other hand, in which a small sum is at stake, may establish some great principle interesting to half the families in the kingdom. The case is exactly the same with that class of subjects of which historians treat. To an

Athenian, in the time of the Peloponnesian war, the result of the battle of Delium was far more important than the fate of the comedy of The Knights. But to us the fact that the comedy of The Knights was brought on the Athenian stage with success is far more important than the fact that the Athenian phalanx gave way at Delium. Neither the one event nor the other has now any intrinsic importance. We are in no danger of being speared by the Thebans. We are not quizzed in The Knights. To us the importance of both events consists in the value of the general truth which is to be learned from them. What general truth do we learn from the accounts which have come down to us of the battle of Delium? Very little more than this, that when two armies fight, it is not improbable that one of them will be very soundly beaten, a truth which it would not, we apprehend, be difficult to establish, even if all memory of the battle of Delium were lost among men. But a man who becomes acquainted with the comedy of The Knights, and with the history of that comedy, at once feels his mind enlarged. Society is presented to him under a new aspect. He may have read and travelled much. He may have visited all the countries of Europe, and the civilised nations of the East. He may have observed the manners of many barbarous races. But here is something altogether different from every thing which he has seen, either among polished men or among savages. Here is a community politically, intellectually, and morally unlike any other community of which he has the means of forming an opinion. This is the really precious part of history, the corn which some threshers carefully sever from the chaff, for the purpose of gathering the chaff into the garner, and flinging the corn into the fire.

Thinking thus, we are glad to learn so much, and would willingly learn more, about the loves of

Sir William and his mistress. In the seventeenth century, to be sure, Louis the Fourteenth was a much more important person than Temple's sweetheart. But death and time equalise all things. Neither the great King, nor the beauty of Bedfordshire, neither the gorgeous paradise of Marli nor Mistress Osborne's favourite walk "in the common that lay hard by the house, where a great many young wenches used to keep sheep and cows and sit in the shade singing of ballads," is any thing to us. Louis and Dorothy are alike dust. A cotton-mill stands on the ruins of Marli; and the Osbornes have ceased to dwell under the ancient roof of Chicksands. But of that information for the sake of which alone it is worth while to study remote events, we find so much in the love letters which Mr. Courtenay has published, that we would gladly purchase equally interesting billets with ten times their weight in state-papers taken at random. To us surely it is as useful to know how the young ladies of England employed themselves a hundred and eighty years ago, how far their minds were cultivated, what were their favourite studies, what degree of liberty was allowed to them, what use they made of that liberty, what accomplishments they most valued in men, and what proofs of tenderness delicacy permitted them to give to favoured suitors, as to know all about the seizure of Franche Comté and the treaty of Nimeguen. The mutual relations of the two sexes seem to us to be at least as important as the mutual relations of any two governments in the world; and a series of letters written by a virtuous, amiable, and sensible girl, and intended for the eye of her lover alone, can scarcely fail to throw some light on the relations of the sexes; whereas it is perfectly possible, as all who have made any historical researches can attest, to read bale after bale of despatches and

protocols, without catching one glimpse of light about the relations of governments.

Mr. Courtenay proclaims that he is one of Dorothy Osborne's devoted servants, and expresses a hope that the publication of her letters will add to the number. We must declare ourselves his rivals. She really seems to have been a very charming young woman, modest, generous, affectionate, intelligent, and sprightly; a royalist, as was to be expected from her connexions, without any of that political asperity which is as unwomanly as a long beard; religious, and occasionally gliding into a very pretty and endearing sort of preaching, yet not too good to partake of such diversions as London afforded under the melancholy rule of the Puritans, or to giggle a little at a ridiculous sermon from a divine who was thought to be one of the great lights of the Assembly at Westminster; with a little turn for coquetry, which was yet perfectly compatible with warm and disinterested attachment, and a little turn for satire, which yet seldom passed the bounds of good-nature. She loved reading; but her studies were not those of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. She read the verses of Cowley and Lord Broghill, French Memoirs recommended by her lover, and the Travels of Fernando Mendez Pinto. But her favourite books were those ponderous French romances which modern readers know chiefly from the pleasant satire of Charlotte Lennox. She could not, however, help laughing at the vile English into which they were translated. Her own style is very agreeable; nor are her letters at all the worse for some passages in which raillery and tenderness are mixed in a very engaging namby-pamby.

When at last the constancy of the lovers had triumphed over all the obstacles which kinsmen and rivals could oppose to their union, a yet more serious

calamity befell them. Poor Mistress Osborne fell ill of the small-pox, and, though she escaped with life, lost all her beauty. To this most severe trial the affection and honour of the lovers of that age was not unfrequently subjected. Our readers probably remember what Mrs. Hutchinson tells us of herself. The lofty Cornelia-like spirit of the aged matron seems to melt into a long forgotten softness when she relates how her beloved Colonel "married her as soon as she was able to quit the chamber, when the priest and all that saw her were affrighted to look on her. But God," she adds, with a not ungraceful vanity, "recompensed his justice and constancy, by restoring her as well as before." Temple showed on this occasion the same justice and constancy which did so much honour to Colonel Hutchinson. The date of the marriage is not exactly known. But Mr. Courtenay supposes it to have taken place about the end of the year 1654. From this time we lose sight of Dorothy, and are reduced to form our opinion of the terms on which she and her husband were from very slight indications which may easily mislead us.

Temple soon went to Ireland, and resided with his father, partly at Dublin, partly in the county of Carlow. Ireland was probably then a more agreeable residence for the higher classes, as compared with England, than it has ever been before or since. In no part of the empire were the superiority of Cromwell's abilities and the force of his character so signally displayed. He had not the power, and probably had not the inclination, to govern that island in the best way. The rebellion of the aboriginal race had excited in England a strong religious and national aversion to them; nor is there any reason to believe that the Protector was so far beyond his age as to be free from the prevailing sentiment. He had vanquished them; he knew that they were in his power;

and he regarded them as a band of malefactors and idolaters, who were mercifully treated if they were not smitten with the edge of the sword. On those who resisted he had made war as the Hebrews made war on the Canaanites. Drogheda was as Jericho; and Wexford as Ai. To the remains of the old population the conqueror granted a peace, such as that which Israel granted to the Gibeonites. He made them hewers of wood and drawers of water. But, good or bad, he could not be otherwise than great. Under favourable circumstances, Ireland would have found in him a most just and beneficent ruler. She found in him a tyrant; not a small, teasing tyrant, such as those who have so long been her curse and her shame, but one of those awful tyrants who, at long intervals, seem to be sent on earth, like avenging angels, with some high commission of destruction and renovation. He was no man of half measures, of mean affronts and ungracious concessions. His Protestant ascendency was not an ascendency of ribands, and fiddles, and statues, and processions. He would never have dreamed of abolishing the penal code and withholding from Catholics the elective franchise, of giving them the elective franchise and excluding them from Parliament, of admitting them to Parliament, and refusing to them a full and equal participation in all the blessings of society and government. The thing most alien from his clear intellect and his commanding spirit was petty persecution. He knew how to tolerate; and he knew how to destroy. His administration in Ireland was an administration on what are now called Orange principles, followed out most ably, most steadily, most undauntedly, most unrelentingly, to every extreme consequence to which those principles lead; and it would, if continued, inevitably have produced the effect which he contemplated, an entire decom-

position and reconstruction of society. He had a great and definite object in view, to make Ireland thoroughly English, to make Ireland another Yorkshire or Norfolk. Thinly peopled as Ireland then was, this end was not unattainable; and there is every reason to believe that, if his policy had been followed during fifty years, this end would have been attained. Instead of an emigration, such as we now see from Ireland to England, there was, under his government, a constant and large emigration from England to Ireland. This tide of population ran almost as strongly as that which now runs from Massachusetts and Connecticut to the states behind the Ohio. The native race was driven back before the advancing van of the Anglo-Saxon population, as the American Indians or the tribes of Southern Africa are now driven back before the white settlers. Those fearful phænomena which have almost invariably attended the planting of civilised colonies in uncivilised countries, and which had been known to the nations of Europe only by distant and questionable rumour, were now publicly exhibited in their sight. The words "extirpation," "eradication," were often in the mouths of the English back settlers of Leinster and Munster, cruel words, yet, in their cruelty, containing more mercy than much softer expressions which have since been sanctioned by universities and cheered by Parliaments. For it is in truth more merciful to extirpate a hundred thousand human beings at once, and to fill the void with a well-governed population, than to misgovern millions through a long succession of generations. We can much more easily pardon tremendous severities inflicted for a great object, than an endless series of paltry vexations and oppressions inflicted for no rational object at all.

Ireland was fast becoming English. Civilisation and wealth were making rapid progress in almost

every part of the island. The effects of that iron despotism are described to us by a hostile witness in very remarkable language. "Which is more wonderful," says Lord Clarendon, "all this was done and settled within little more than two years, to that degree of perfection that there were many buildings raised for beauty as well as use, orderly and regular plantations of trees, and fences and inclosures raised throughout the kingdom, purchases made by one from another at very valuable rates, and jointures made upon marriages, and all other conveyances and settlements executed, as in a kingdom at peace within itself, and where no doubt could be made of the validity of titles."

All Temple's feelings about Irish questions were those of a colonist and a member of the dominant caste. He troubled himself as little about the welfare of the remains of the old Celtic population, as an English farmer on the Swan River troubles himself about the New Hollanders, or a Dutch boor at the Cape about the Caffres. The years which he passed in Ireland, while the Cromwellian system was in full operation, he always described as "years of great satisfaction." Farming, gardening, county business, and studies rather entertaining than profound, occupied his time. In politics he took no part, and many years later he attributed this inaction to his love of the ancient constitution, which, he said, "would not suffer him to enter into public affairs till the way was plain for the King's happy restoration." It does not appear, indeed, that any offer of employment was made to him. If he really did refuse any preferment, we may, without much breach of charity, attribute the refusal rather to the caution which, during his whole life, prevented him from running any risk, than to the fervour of his loyalty.

In 1660 he made his first appearance in public

life. He sat in the convention which, in the midst of the general confusion that preceded the Restoration, was summoned by the chiefs of the army of Ireland to meet in Dublin. After the King's return an Irish parliament was regularly convoked, in which Temple represented the county of Carlow. The details of his conduct in this situation are not known to us. But we are told in general terms, and can easily believe, that he showed great moderation, and great aptitude for business. It is probable that he also distinguished himself in debate; for many years afterwards he remarked that "his friends in Ireland used to think that, if he had any talent at all, it lay in that way."

In May, 1663, the Irish parliament was prorogued, and Temple repaired to England with his wife. His income amounted to about five hundred pounds a year, a sum which was then sufficient for the wants of a family mixing in fashionable circles. He passed two years in London, where he seems to have led that easy, lounging life which was best suited to his temper.

He was not, however, unmindful of his interest. He had brought with him letters of introduction from the Duke of Ormond, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, to Clarendon, and to Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington, who was Secretary of State. Clarendon was at the head of affairs. But his power was visibly declining, and was certain to decline more and more every day. An observer much less discerning than Temple might easily perceive that the Chancellor was a man who belonged to a by-gone world, a representative of a past age, of obsolete modes of thinking, of unfashionable vices, and of more unfashionable virtues. His long exile had made him a stranger in the country of his birth. His mind, heated by conflict and by personal suffering, was far

more set against popular and tolerant courses than it had been at the time of the breaking out of the civil war. He pined for the decorous tyranny of the old Whitehall; for the days of that sainted king who deprived his people of their money and their ears, but let their wives and daughters alone; and could scarcely reconcile himself to a court with a seraglio and without a Star Chamber. By taking this course he made himself every day more odious, both to the sovereign, who loved pleasure much more than prerogative, and to the people, who dreaded royal prerogatives much more than royal pleasures; and thus he was at last more detested by the Court than any chief of the Opposition, and more detested by the Parliament than any pandar of the Court.

Temple, whose great maxim was to offend no party, was not likely to cling to the falling fortunes of a minister the study of whose life was to offend all parties. Arlington, whose influence was gradually rising as that of Clarendon diminished, was the most useful patron to whom a young adventurer could attach himself. This statesman, without virtue, wisdom, or strength of mind, had raised himself to greatness by superficial qualities, and was the mere creature of the time, the circumstances, and the company. The dignified reserve of manners which he had acquired during a residence in Spain provoked the ridicule of those who considered the usages of the French court as the only standard of good breeding, but served to impress the crowd with a favourable opinion of his sagacity and gravity. In situations where the solemnity of the Escurial would have been out of place, he threw it aside without difficulty, and conversed with great humour and vivacity. While the multitude were talking of "Bennet's grave looks,"[1]

[1] "Bennet's grave looks were a pretence" is a line in one of the best political poems of that age.

his mirth made his presence always welcome in the royal closet. While Buckingham, in the ante-chamber, was mimicking the pompous Castilian strut of the Secretary, for the diversion of Mistress Stuart, this stately Don was ridiculing Clarendon's sober counsels to the King within, till his Majesty cried with laughter, and the Chancellor with vexation. There perhaps never was a man whose outward demeanour made such different impressions on different people. Count Hamilton, for example, describes him as a stupid formalist, who had been made secretary solely on account of his mysterious and important looks. Clarendon, on the other hand, represents him as a man whose "best faculty was raillery," and who was "for his pleasant and agreeable humour acceptable unto the King." The truth seems to be that, destitute as Bennet was of all the higher qualifications of a minister, he had a wonderful talent for becoming, in outward semblance, all things to all men. He had two aspects, a busy and serious one for the public, whom he wished to awe into respect, and a gay one for Charles, who thought that the greatest service which could be rendered to a prince was to amuse him. Yet both these were masks which he laid aside when they had served their turn. Long after, when he had retired to his deer-park and fish-ponds in Suffolk, and had no motive to act the part either of the hidalgo or of the buffoon, Evelyn, who was neither an unpractised nor an undiscerning judge, conversed much with him, and pronounced him to be a man of singularly polished manners and of great colloquial powers.

Clarendon, proud and imperious by nature, soured by age and disease, and relying on his great talents and services, sought out no new allies. He seems to have taken a sort of morose pleasure in slighting and provoking all the rising talent of the kingdom. His

connexions were almost entirely confined to the small circle, every day becoming smaller, of old cavaliers who had been friends of his youth or companions of his exile. Arlington, on the other hand, beat up everywhere for recruits. No man had a greater personal following, and no man exerted himself more to serve his adherents. It was a kind of habit with him to push up his dependents to his own level, and then to complain bitterly of their ingratitude because they did not choose to be his dependents any longer. It was thus that he quarrelled with two successive Treasurers, Gifford and Danby. To Arlington Temple attached himself, and was not sparing of warm professions of affection, or even, we grieve to say, of gross and almost profane adulation. In no long time he obtained his reward.

England was in a very different situation with respect to foreign powers from that which she had occupied during the splendid administration of the Protector. She was engaged in war with the United Provinces, then governed with almost regal power by the Grand Pensionary, John de Witt; and though no war had ever cost the kingdom so much, none had ever been more feeble and meanly conducted. France had espoused the interests of the States General. Denmark seemed likely to take the same side. Spain, indignant at the close political and matrimonial alliance which Charles had formed with the House of Braganza, was not disposed to lend him any assistance. The great plague of London had suspended trade, had scattered the ministers and nobles, had paralysed every department of the public service, and had increased the gloomy discontent which misgovernment had begun to excite throughout the nation. One continental ally England possessed, the Bishop of Munster, a restless and ambitious prelate, bred a soldier, and still a soldier in all his tastes and passions.

He hated the Dutch for interfering in the affairs of his see, and declared himself willing to risk his little dominions for the chance of revenge. He sent, accordingly, a strange kind of ambassador to London, a Benedictine monk, who spoke bad English, and looked, says Lord Clarendon, "like a carter." This person brought a letter from the Bishop, offering to make an attack by land on the Dutch territory. The English Ministers eagerly caught at the proposal, and promised a subsidy of 500,000 rix-dollars to their new ally. It was determined to send an English agent to Munster; and Arlington, to whose department the business belonged, fixed on Temple for this post.

Temple accepted the commission, and acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his employers, though the whole plan ended in nothing, and the Bishop, finding that France had joined Holland, made haste, after pocketing an instalment of his subsidy, to conclude a separate peace. Temple, at a later period, looked back with no great satisfaction to this part of his life; and excused himself for undertaking a negotiation from which little good could result, by saying that he was then young and very new to business. In truth, he could hardly have been placed in a situation where the eminent diplomatic talents which he possessed could have appeared to less advantage. He was ignorant of the German language, and did not easily accommodate himself to the manners of the people. He could not bear much wine; and none but a hard drinker had any chance of success in Westphalian Society. Under all these disadvantages, however, he gave so much satisfaction that he was created a baronet, and appointed resident at the viceregal court of Brussels.

Brussels suited Temple far better than the palaces of the boar-hunting and wine-bibbing princes of Germany. He now occupied one of the most important

posts of observation in which a diplomatist could be stationed. He was placed in the territory of a great neutral power, between the territories of two great powers which were at war with England. From this excellent school he soon came forth the most accomplished negotiator of his age.

In the meantime the government of Charles had suffered a succession of humiliating disasters. The extravagance of the Court had dissipated all the means which Parliament had supplied for the purpose of carrying on offensive hostilities. It was determined to wage only a defensive war; and even for defensive war the vast resources of England, managed by triflers and public robbers, were found insufficient. The Dutch insulted the British coasts, sailed up the Thames, took Sheerness, and carried their ravages to Chatham. The blaze of the ships burning in the river was seen at London: it was rumoured that a foreign army had landed at Gravesend; and military men seriously proposed to abandon the Tower. To such a depth of infamy had a bad administration reduced that proud and victorious country, which a few years before had dictated its pleasure to Mazarine, to the States General, and to the Vatican. Humbled by the events of the war, and dreading the just anger of Parliament, the English Ministry hastened to huddle up a peace with France and Holland at Breda.

But a new scene was about to open. It had already been for some time apparent to discerning observers, that England and Holland were threatened by a common danger, much more formidable than any which they had reason to apprehend from each other. The old enemy of their independence and of their religion was no longer to be dreaded. The sceptre had passed away from Spain. That mighty empire, on which the sun never set, which had

crushed the liberties of Italy and Germany, which had occupied Paris with its armies, and covered the British seas with its sails, was at the mercy of every spoiler; and Europe observed with dismay the rapid growth of a new and more formidable power. Men looked to Spain and saw only weakness disguised and increased by pride, dominions of vast bulk and little strength, tempting, unwieldy, and defenceless, an empty treasury, a sullen and torpid nation, a child on the throne, factions in the council, ministers who served only themselves, and soldiers who were terrible only to their countrymen. Men looked to France, and saw a large and compact territory, a rich soil, a central situation, a bold, alert, and ingenious people, large revenues, numerous and well-disciplined troops, an active and ambitious prince, in the flower of his age, surrounded by generals of unrivalled skill. The projects of Louis could be counteracted only by ability, vigour, and union on the part of his neighbours. Ability and vigour had hitherto been found in the councils of Holland alone, and of union there was no appearance in Europe. The question of Portuguese independence separated England from Spain. Old grudges, recent hostilities, maritime pretensions, commercial competition separated England as widely from the United Provinces.

Spain.

The great object of Louis, from the beginning to the end of his reign, was the acquisition of those large and valuable provinces of the Spanish monarchy, which lay contiguous to the eastern frontier of France. Already, before the conclusion of the treaty of Breda, he had invaded those provinces. He now pushed on his conquests with scarcely any resistance. Fortress after fortress was taken. Brussels itself was in danger; and Temple thought it wise to send his wife and children to England. But his sister, Lady

Belgium.

Giffard, who had been some time his inmate, and who seems to have been a more important personage in his family than his wife, still remained with him.

De Witt saw the progress of the French arms with painful anxiety. But it was not in the power of Holland alone to save Flanders; and the difficulty of forming an extensive coalition for that purpose appeared almost insuperable. Louis, indeed, affected moderation. He declared himself willing to agree to a compromise with Spain. But these offers were undoubtedly mere professions, intended to quiet the apprehensions of the neighbouring powers; and, as his position became every day more and more advantageous, it was to be expected that he would rise in his demands.

Such was the state of affairs when Temple obtained from the English Ministry permission to make a tour in Holland incognito. In company with Lady Giffard he arrived at the Hague. He was not charged with any public commission, but he availed himself of this opportunity of introducing himself to De Witt. "My only business, sir," he said, "is to see the things which are most considerable in your country, and I should execute my design very imperfectly if I went away without seeing you." De Witt, who from report had formed a high opinion of Temple, was pleased by the compliment, and replied with a frankness and cordiality which at once led to intimacy. The two statesmen talked calmly over the causes which had estranged England from Holland, congratulated each other on the peace, and then began to discuss the new dangers which menaced Europe. Temple, who had no authority to say any thing on behalf of the English Government, expressed himself very guardedly. De Witt, who was himself the Dutch Government, had no reason to be reserved. He openly declared that his

wish was to see a general coalition formed for the preservation of Flanders. His simplicity and openness amazed Temple, who had been accustomed to the affected solemnity of his patron, the Secretary, and to the eternal doublings and evasions which passed for great feats of statesmanship among the Spanish politicians at Brussels. "Whoever," he wrote to Arlington, "deals with M. de Witt must go the same plain way that he pretends to in his negotiations, without refining or colouring or offering shadow for substance." Temple was scarcely less struck by the modest dwelling and frugal table of the first citizen of the richest state in the world. While Clarendon was amazing London with a dwelling more sumptuous than the palace of his master, while Arlington was lavishing his ill-gotten wealth on the decoys and orange-gardens and interminable conservatories of Euston, the great statesman who had frustrated all their plans of conquest, and the roar of whose guns they had heard with terror even in the galleries of Whitehall, kept only a single servant, walked about the streets in the plainest garb, and never used a coach except for visits of ceremony.

Temple sent a full account of his interview with De Witt to Arlington, who, in consequence of the fall of the Chancellor, now shared with the Duke of Buckingham the principal direction of affairs. Arlington showed no disposition to meet the advances of the Dutch minister. Indeed, as was amply proved a few years later, both he and his master were perfectly willing to purchase the means of misgoverning England by giving up, not only Flanders, but the whole Continent to France. Temple, who distinctly saw that a moment had arrived at which it was possible to reconcile his country with Holland, to reconcile Charles with the Parliament, to bridle the power of Louis, to efface the shame of the late

ignominious war, to restore England to the same place in Europe which she had occupied under Cromwell, became more and more urgent in his representations. Arlington's replies were for some time couched in cold and ambiguous terms. But the events which followed the meeting of Parliament, in the autumn of 1667, appear to have produced an entire change in his views. The discontent of the nation was deep and general. The administration was attacked in all its parts. The King and the ministers laboured, not unsuccessfully, to throw on Clarendon the blame of past miscarriages; but though the Commons were resolved that the late Chancellor should be the first victim, it was by no means clear that he would be the last. The Secretary was personally attacked with great bitterness in the course of the debates. One of the resolutions of the Lower House against Clarendon was in truth a censure of the foreign policy of the Government, as too favourable to France. To these events chiefly we are inclined to attribute the change which at this crisis took place in the measures of England. The Ministry seem to have felt that, if they wished to derive any advantage from Clarendon's downfall, it was necessary for them to abandon what was supposed to be Clarendon's system, and by some splendid and popular measure to win the confidence of the nation. Accordingly, in December, 1667, Temple received a despatch containing instructions of the highest importance. The plan which he had so strongly recommended was approved; and he was directed to visit De Witt as speedily as possible, and to ascertain whether the States were willing to enter into an offensive and defensive league with England against the projects of France. Temple, accompanied by his sister, instantly set out for the Hague, and laid the propositions of the English Government before the Grand Pensionary. The Dutch statesman answered

with characteristic straightforwardness, that he was fully ready to agree to a defensive confederacy, but that it was the fundamental principle of the foreign policy of the States to make no offensive alliance under any circumstances whatsoever. With this answer Temple hastened from the Hague to London, had an audience of the King, related what had passed between himself and De Witt, exerted himself to remove the unfavourable opinion which had been conceived of the Grand Pensionary at the English court, and had the satisfaction of succeeding in all his objects. On the evening of the first of January, 1668, a council was held, at which Charles declared his resolution to unite with the Dutch on their own terms. Temple and his indefatigable sister immediately sailed again for the Hague, and, after weathering a violent storm in which they were very nearly lost, arrived in safety at the place of their destination.

On this occasion, as on every other, the dealings between Temple and De Witt were singularly fair and open. When they met, Temple began by recapitulating what had passed at their last interview. De Witt, who was as little given to lying with his face as with his tongue, marked his assent by his looks while the recapitulation proceeded, and, when it was concluded, answered that Temple's memory was perfectly correct, and thanked him for proceeding in so exact and sincere a manner. Temple then informed the Grand Pensionary that the King of England had determined to close with the proposal of a defensive alliance. De Witt had not expected so speedy a resolution; and his countenance indicated surprise as well as pleasure. But he did not retract; and it was speedily arranged that England and Holland should unite for the purpose of compelling Louis to abide by the compromise which he had formerly offered. The next object of the two

statesmen was to induce another government to become a party to their league. The victories of Gustavus and Torstenson, and the political talents of Oxenstiern, had obtained for Sweden a consideration in Europe, disproportioned to her real power: the princes of Northern Germany stood in great awe of her; and De Witt and Temple agreed that if she could be induced to accede to the league, "it would be too strong a bar for France to venture on." Temple went that same evening to Count Dona, the Swedish Minister at the Hague, took a seat in the most unceremonious manner, and, with that air of frankness and good-will by which he often succeeded in rendering his diplomatic overtures acceptable, explained the scheme which was in agitation. Dona was greatly pleased and flattered. He had not powers which would authorise him to conclude a treaty of such importance. But he strongly advised Temple and De Witt to do their part without delay, and seemed confident that Sweden would accede. The ordinary course of public business in Holland was too slow for the present emergency; and De Witt appeared to have some scruples about breaking through the established forms. But the urgency and dexterity of Temple prevailed. The States General took the responsibility of executing the treaty with a celerity unprecedented in the annals of the federation, and indeed inconsistent with its fundamental laws. The state of public feeling was, however, such in all the provinces, that this irregularity was not merely pardoned but applauded. When the instrument had been formally signed, the Dutch Commissioners embraced the English Plenipotentiary with the warmest expressions of kindness and confidence. "At Breda," exclaimed Temple, "we embraced as friends, here as brothers."

This memorable negotiation occupied only five

days. De Witt complimented Temple in high terms on having effected in so short a time what must, under other management, have been the work of months; and Temple, in his despatches, spoke in equally high terms of De Witt. "I must add these words, to do M. de Witt right, that I found him as plain, as direct and square in the course of this business as any man could be, though often stiff in points where he thought any advantage could accrue to his country; and have all the reason in the world to be satisfied with him; and for his industry, no man had ever more I am sure. For these five days at least, neither of us spent any idle hours, neither day nor night."

Sweden willingly acceded to the league, which is known in history by the name of the Triple Alliance; and, after some signs of ill-humour on the part of France, a general pacification was the result.

The Triple Alliance may be viewed in two lights, as a measure of foreign policy, and as a measure of domestic policy; and under both aspects it seems to us deserving of all the praise which has been bestowed upon it.

Dr. Lingard, who is undoubtedly a very able and well informed writer, but whose great fundamental rule of judging seems to be that the popular opinion on a historical question cannot possibly be correct, speaks very slightingly of this celebrated treaty; and Mr. Courtenay, who by no means regards Temple with that profound veneration which is generally found in biographers, has conceded, in our opinion, far too much to Dr. Lingard.

The reasoning of Dr. Lingard is simply this. The Triple Alliance only compelled Louis to make peace on the terms on which, before the alliance was formed, he had offered to make peace. How can it then be said that this alliance arrested his career, and

preserved Europe from his ambition? Now, this reasoning is evidently of no force at all, except on the supposition that Louis would have held himself bound by his former offers, if the alliance had not been formed; and, if Dr. Lingard thinks this a reasonable supposition, we should be disposed to say to him, in the words of that great politician, Mrs. Western; "Indeed, brother, you would make a fine plenipo to negotiate with the French. They would soon persuade you that they take towns out of mere defensive principles." Our own impression is that Louis made his offer only in order to avert some such measure as the Triple Alliance, and adhered to his offer only in consequence of that alliance. He had refused to consent to an armistice. He had made all his arrangements for a winter campaign. In the very week in which Temple and the States concluded their agreement at the Hague, Franche Comté was attacked by the French armies, and in three weeks the whole province was conquered. This prey Louis was compelled to disgorge. And what compelled him? Did the object seem to him small or contemptible? On the contrary, the annexation of Franche Comté to his kingdom was one of the favourite projects of his life. Was he withheld by regard for his word? Did he, who never in any other transaction of his reign showed the smallest respect for the most solemn obligations of public faith, who violated the Treaty of the Pyrenees, who violated the Treaty of Aix, who violated the Treaty of Nimeguen, who violated the Partition Treaty, who violated the Treaty of Utrecht, feel himself restrained by his word on this single occasion? Can any person who is acquainted with his character and with his whole policy doubt that, if the neighbouring powers would have looked quietly on, he would instantly have risen in his demands? How then stands the

case? He wished to keep Franche Comté. It was not from regard to his word that he ceded Franche Comté. Why then did he cede Franche Comté? We answer, as all Europe answered at the time, from fear of the Triple Alliance.

But grant that Louis was not really stopped in his progress by this famous league; still it is certain that the world then, and long after, believed that he was so stopped, and that this was the prevailing impression in France as well as in other countries. Temple, therefore, at the very least, succeeded in raising the credit of his country, and in lowering the credit of a rival power. Here there is no room for controversy. No grubbing among old state-papers will ever bring to light any document which will shake these facts; that Europe believed the ambition of France to have been curbed by the three powers; that England, a few months before the last among the nations, forced to abandon her own seas, unable to defend the mouths of her own rivers, regained almost as high a place in the estimation of her neighbours as she had held in the times of Elizabeth and Oliver; and that all this change of opinion was produced in five days by wise and resolute counsels, without the firing of a single gun. That the Triple Alliance effected this will hardly be disputed; and therefore, even if it effected nothing else, it must still be regarded as a masterpiece of diplomacy.

Considered as a measure of domestic policy, this treaty seems to be equally deserving of approbation. It did much to allay discontents, to reconcile the sovereign with a people who had, under his wretched administration, become ashamed of him and of themselves. It was a kind of pledge for internal good government. The foreign relations of the kingdom had at that time the closest connexion with our domestic policy. From the Restoration to the accession

of the House of Hanover, Holland and France were to England what the right-hand horseman and the left-hand horseman in Bürger's fine ballad were to the Wildgraf, the good and the evil counsellor, the angel of light and the angel of darkness. The ascendency of France was inseparably connected with the prevalence of tyranny in domestic affairs. The ascendency of Holland was as inseparably connected with the prevalence of political liberty and of mutual toleration among Protestant sects. How fatal and degrading an influence Louis was destined to exercise on the British counsels, how great a deliverance our country was destined to owe to the States, could not be foreseen when the Triple Alliance was concluded. Yet even then all discerning men considered it as a good omen for the English constitution and the reformed religion, that the Government had attached itself to Holland, and had assumed a firm and somewhat hostile attitude towards France. The fame of this measure was the greater, because it stood so entirely alone. It was the single eminently good act performed by the Government during the interval between the Restoration and the Revolution.[1] Every person who had the smallest part in it, and some who had no part in it at all, battled for a share of the credit. The most parsimonious republicans were ready to grant money for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this popular alliance; and the great Tory poet of that age, in his finest satires, repeatedly spoke with reverence of the "triple bond."

This negotiation raised the fame of Temple both at home and abroad to a great height, to such a height, indeed, as seems to have excited the jealousy of his friend Arlington. While London and Amsterdam resounded with acclamations of joy, the Secre-

[1] "The only good public thing that hath been done since the King came into England."—PEPYS's *Diary*, *February* 14. 1667-8.

tary, in very cold official language, communicated to his friend the approbation of the King; and, lavish as the Government was of titles and of money, its ablest servant was neither ennobled nor enriched.

Temple's next mission was to Aix-la-Chapelle, where a general congress met for the purpose of perfecting the work of the Triple Alliance. On his road he received abundant proofs of the estimation in which he was held. Salutes were fired from the walls of the towns through which he passed; the population poured forth into the streets to see him; and the magistrates entertained him with speeches and banquets. After the close of the negotiations at Aix he was appointed Ambassador at the Hague. But in both these missions he experienced much vexation from the rigid, and, indeed, unjust parsimony of the Government. Profuse to many unworthy applicants, the Ministers were niggardly to him alone. They secretly disliked his politics: and they seem to have indemnified themselves for the humiliation of adopting his measures, by cutting down his salary and delaying the settlement of his outfit.

At the Hague he was received with cordiality by De Witt, and with the most signal marks of respect by the States General. His situation was in one point extremely delicate. The Prince of Orange, the hereditary chief of the faction opposed to the administration of De Witt, was the nephew of Charles. To preserve the confidence of the ruling party without showing any want of respect to so near a relation of his own master, was no easy task. But Temple acquitted himself so well that he appears to have been in great favour, both with the Grand Pensionary and with the Prince.

In the main, the years which he spent at the Hague seem, in spite of some pecuniary difficulties occasioned by the ill-will of the English Ministers, to have passed

very agreeably. He enjoyed the highest personal consideration. He was surrounded by objects interesting in the highest degree to a man of his observant turn of mind. He had no wearing labour, no heavy responsibility; and, if he had no opportunity of adding to his high reputation, he ran no risk of impairing it.

But evil times were at hand. Though Charles had for a moment deviated into a wise and dignified policy, his heart had always been with France; and France employed every means of seduction to lure him back. His impatience of control, his greediness for money, his passion for beauty, his family affections, all his tastes, all his feelings, were practised on with the utmost dexterity. His interior Cabinet was now composed of men such as that generation, and that generation alone, produced; of men at whose audacious profligacy the renegades and jobbers of our own time look with the same sort of admiring despair with which our sculptors contemplate the Theseus, and our painters the Cartoons. To be a real, hearty, deadly enemy of the liberties and religion of the nation was, in that dark conclave, an honourable distinction, a distinction which belonged only to the daring and impetuous Clifford. His associates were men to whom all creeds and all constitutions were alike; who were equally ready to profess the faith of Geneva, of Lambeth, and of Rome; who were equally ready to be tools of power without any sense of loyalty, and stirrers of sedition without any zeal for freedom.

It was hardly possible even for a man so penetrating as De Witt to foresee to what depths of wickedness and infamy this execrable administration would descend. Yet, many signs of the great woe which was coming on Europe, the visit of the Duchess of Orleans to her brother, the unexplained mission of

Buckingham to Paris, the sudden occupation of Lorraine by the French, made the Grand Pensionary uneasy; and his alarm increased when he learned that Temple had received orders to repair instantly to London. De Witt earnestly pressed for an explanation. Temple very sincerely replied that he hoped that the English Ministers would adhere to the principles of the Triple Alliance. "I can answer," he said, "only for myself. But that I can do. If a new system is to be adopted, I will never have any part in it. I have told the King so; and I will make my words good. If I return you will know more: and if I do not return you will guess more." De Witt smiled, and answered that he would hope the best, and would do all in his power to prevent others from forming unfavourable surmises.

In October, 1670, Temple reached London; and all his worst suspicions were immediately more than confirmed. He repaired to the Secretary's house, and was kept an hour and a half waiting in the antechamber, whilst Lord Ashley was closeted with Arlington. When at length the doors were thrown open, Arlington was dry and cold, asked trifling questions about the voyage, and then, in order to escape from the necessity of discussing business, called in his daughter, an engaging little girl of three years old, who was long after described by poets "as dressed in all the bloom of smiling nature," and whom Evelyn, one of the witnesses of her inauspicious marriage, mournfully designated as "the sweetest, hopefullest, most beautiful child, and most virtuous too." Any particular conversation was impossible: and Temple who, with all his constitutional or philosophical indifference, was sufficiently sensitive on the side of vanity, felt this treatment keenly. The next day he offered himself to the notice of the King, who was snuffing up the morning air and feeding his ducks

in the Mall. Charles was civil, but, like Arlington, carefully avoided all conversation on politics. Temple found that all his most respectable friends were entirely excluded from the secrets of the inner council, and were awaiting in anxiety and dread for what those mysterious deliberations might produce. At length he obtained a glimpse of light. The bold spirit and fierce passions of Clifford made him the most unfit of all men to be the keeper of a momentous secret. He told Temple, with great vehemence, that the States had behaved basely, that De Witt was a rogue and a rascal, that it was below the King of England, or any other king, to have any thing to do with such wretches; that this ought to be made known to all the world, and that it was the duty of the Minister at the Hague to declare it publicly. Temple commanded his temper as well as he could, and replied calmly and firmly, that he should make no such declaration, and that, if he were called upon to give his opinion of the States and their Ministers, he would say exactly what he thought.

He now saw clearly that the tempest was gathering fast, that the great alliance which he had formed and over which he had watched with parental care was about to be dissolved, that times were at hand when it would be necessary for him, if he continued in public life, either to take part decidedly against the Court, or to forfeit the high reputation which he enjoyed at home and abroad. He began to make preparations for retiring altogether from business. He enlarged a little garden which he had purchased at Sheen, and laid out some money in ornamenting his house there. He was still nominally ambassador to Holland; and the English Ministers continued during some months to flatter the States with the hope that he would speedily return. At length, in June, 1671, the designs of the Cabal were ripe. The infamous

treaty with France had been ratified. The season of deception was past, and that of insolence and violence had arrived. Temple received his formal dismission, kissed the King's hand, was repaid for his services with some of those vague compliments and promises which cost so little to the cold heart, the easy temper, and the ready tongue of Charles, and quietly withdrew to his little nest, as he called it, at Sheen.

There he amused himself with gardening, which he practised so successfully that the fame of his fruit-trees soon spread far and wide. But letters were his chief solace. He had, as we have mentioned, been from his youth in the habit of diverting himself with composition. The clear and agreeable language of his despatches had early attracted the notice of his employers; and before the peace of Breda, he had, at the request of Arlington, published a pamphlet on the war, of which nothing is now known, except that it had some vogue at the time, and that Charles, not a contemptible judge, pronounced it to be very well written. Temple had also, a short time before he began to reside at the Hague, written a treatise on the state of Ireland, in which he showed all the feelings of a Cromwellian. He had gradually formed a style singularly lucid and melodious, superficially deformed, indeed, by Gallicisms and Hispanicisms, picked up in travel or in negotiation, but at the bottom pure English, which generally flowed along with careless simplicity, but occasionally rose even into Ciceronian magnificence. The length of his sentences has often been remarked. But in truth this length is only apparent. A critic who considers as one sentence every thing that lies between two full stops will undoubtedly call Temple's sentences long. But a critic who examines them carefully will find that they are not swollen by parenthetical matter, that their structure is scarcely ever intricate, that

they are formed merely by accumulation, and that, by the simple process of now and then leaving out a conjunction, and now and then substituting a full stop for a semicolon, they might, without any alteration in the order of the words, be broken up into very short periods, with no sacrifice except that of euphony. The long sentences of Hooker and Clarendon, on the contrary, are really long sentences, and cannot be turned into short ones, without being entirely taken to pieces.

The best known of the works which Temple composed during his first retreat from official business are an Essay on Government, which seems to us exceedingly childish, and an Account of the United Provinces, which we value as a masterpiece in its kind. Whoever compares these two treatises will probably agree with us in thinking that Temple was not a very deep or accurate reasoner, but was an excellent observer, that he had no call to philosophical speculation, but that he was qualified to excel as a writer of Memoirs and Travels.

While Temple was engaged in these pursuits, the great storm which had long been brooding over Europe burst with such fury as for a moment seemed to threaten ruin to all free governments and all Protestant churches. France and England, without seeking for any decent pretext, declared war against Holland. The immense armies of Louis poured across the Rhine, and invaded the territory of the United Provinces. The Dutch seemed to be paralysed by terror. Great towns opened their gates to straggling parties. Regiments flung down their arms without seeing an enemy. Guelderland, Overyssel, Utrecht were overrun by the conquerors. The fires of the French camp were seen from the walls of Amsterdam. In the first madness of despair the devoted people turned their rage against the most illustrious

of their fellow-citizens. De Ruyter was saved with difficulty from assassins. De Witt was torn to pieces by an infuriated rabble. No hope was left to the Commonwealth, save in the dauntless, the ardent, the indefatigable, the unconquerable spirit which glowed under the frigid demeanour of the young Prince of Orange.

That great man rose at once to the full dignity of his part, and approved himself a worthy descendant of the line of heroes who had vindicated the liberties of Europe against the House of Austria. Nothing could shake his fidelity to his country, not his close connexion with the royal family of England, not the most earnest solicitations, not the most tempting offers. The spirit of the nation, that spirit which had maintained the great conflict against the gigantic power of Philip, revived in all its strength. Counsels, such as are inspired by a generous despair, and are almost always followed by a speedy dawn of hope, were gravely concerted by the statesmen of Holland. To open their dykes, to man their ships, to leave their country, with all its miracles of art and industry, its cities, its canals, its villas, its pastures, and its tulip gardens, buried under the waves of the German Ocean, to bear to a distant climate their Calvinistic faith and their old Batavian liberties, to fix, perhaps with happier auspices, the new Stadthouse of their Commonwealth, under other stars, and amidst a strange vegetation, in the Spice Islands of the Eastern seas; such were the plans which they had the spirit to form; and it is seldom that men who have the spirit to form such plans are reduced to the necessity of executing them.

The Allies had, during a short period, obtained success beyond their hopes. This was their auspicious moment. They neglected to improve it. It passed away; and it returned no more. The

Prince of Orange arrested the progress of the French armies. Louis returned to be amused and flattered at Versailles. The country was under water. The winter approached. The weather became stormy. The fleets of the combined kings could no longer keep the sea. The republic had obtained a respite; and the circumstances were such that a respite was, in a military view, important, in a political view almost decisive.

The alliance against Holland, formidable as it was, was yet of such a nature that it could not succeed at all, unless it succeeded at once. The English Ministers could not carry on the war without money. They could legally obtain money only from the Parliament; and they were most unwilling to call the Parliament together. The measures which Charles had adopted at home were even more unpopular than his foreign policy. He had bound himself by a treaty with Louis to reestablish the Catholic religion in England; and, in pursuance of this design, he had entered on the same path which his brother afterwards trod with greater obstinacy to a more fatal end. The King had annulled, by his own sole authority, the laws against Catholics and other dissenters. The matter of the Declaration of Indulgence exasperated one half of his subjects, and the manner the other half. Liberal men would have rejoiced to see a toleration granted, at least to all Protestant sects. Many high churchmen had no objection to the King's dispensing power. But a tolerant act done in an unconstitutional way excited the opposition of all who were zealous either for the Church or for the privileges of the people, that is to say, of ninety-nine Englishmen out of a hundred. The Ministers were, therefore, most unwilling to meet the Houses. Lawless and desperate as their counsels were, the boldest of them had too much value for his neck to think of

resorting to benevolences, privy-seals, ship-money, or any of the other unlawful modes of extortion which had been familiar to the preceding age. The audacious fraud of shutting up the Exchequer furnished them with about twelve hundred thousand pounds, a sum which, even in better hands than theirs, would not have sufficed for the war-charges of a single year. And this was a step which could never be repeated, a step which, like most breaches of public faith, was speedily found to have caused pecuniary difficulties greater than those which it removed. All the money that could be raised was gone; Holland was not conquered; and the King had no resource but in a Parliament.

Had a general election taken place at this crisis, it is probable that the country would have sent up representatives as resolutely hostile to the Court as those who met in November, 1640; that the whole domestic and foreign policy of the Government would have been instantly changed; and that the members of the Cabal would have expiated their crimes on Tower Hill. But the House of Commons was still the same which had been elected twelve years before, in the midst of the transports of joy, repentance, and loyalty which followed the Restoration; and no pains had been spared to attach it to the Court by places, pensions, and bribes. To the great mass of the people it was scarcely less odious than the Cabinet itself. Yet, though it did not immediately proceed to those strong measures which a new House would in all probability have adopted, it was sullen and unmanageable, and undid, slowly indeed, and by degrees, but most effectually, all that the Ministers had done. In one session it annihilated their system of internal government. In a second session it gave a death-blow to their foreign policy.

The dispensing power was the first object of

attack. The Commons would not expressly approve the war; but neither did they as yet expressly condemn it; and they were even willing to grant the King a supply for the purpose of continuing hostilities, on condition that he would redress internal grievances, among which the Declaration of Indulgence held the foremost place.

Shaftesbury, who was Chancellor, saw that the game was up, that he had got all that was to be got by siding with despotism and Popery, and that it was high time to think of being a demagogue and a good Protestant. The Lord Treasurer Clifford was marked out by his boldness, by his openness, by his zeal for the Catholic religion, by something which, compared with the villany of his colleagues, might almost be called honesty, to be the scapegoat of the whole conspiracy. The King came in person to the House of Peers for the purpose of requesting their Lordships to mediate between him and the Commons touching the Declaration of Indulgence. He remained in the House while his speech was taken into consideration; a common practice with him; for the debates amused his sated mind, and were sometimes, he used to say, as good as a comedy. A more sudden turn his Majesty had certainly never seen in any comedy of intrigue, either at his own play-house, or at the Duke's, than that which this memorable debate produced. The Lord Treasurer spoke with characteristic ardour and intrepidity in defence of the Declaration. When he sat down the Lord Chancellor rose from the woolsack, and, to the amazement of the King and of the House, attacked Clifford, attacked the Declaration for which he had himself spoken in Council, gave up the whole policy of the Cabinet, and declared himself on the side of the House of Commons. Even that age had not witnessed so portentous a display of impudence.

The King, by the advice of the French Court, which cared much more about the war on the Continent than about the conversion of the English heretics, determined to save his foreign policy at the expense of his plans in favour of the Catholic Church. He obtained a supply; and in return for this concession he cancelled the Declaration of Indulgence and made a formal renunciation of the dispensing power before he prorogued the Houses.

But it was no more in his power to go on with the war than to maintain his arbitrary system at home. His Ministry, betrayed within, and fiercely assailed from without, went rapidly to pieces. Clifford threw down the white staff, and retired to the woods of Ugbrook, vowing with bitter tears, that he would never again see that turbulent city, and that perfidious Court. Shaftesbury was ordered to deliver up the Great Seal, and instantly carried over his front of brass and his tongue of poison to the ranks of the Opposition. The remaining members of the Cabal had neither the capacity of the late Chancellor, nor the courage and enthusiasm of the late Treasurer. They were not only unable to carry on their former projects, but began to tremble for their own lands and heads. The Parliament, as soon as it again met, began to murmur against the alliance with France and the war with Holland; and the murmur gradually swelled into a fierce and terrible clamour. Strong resolutions were adopted against Lauderdale and Buckingham. Articles of impeachment were exhibited against Arlington. The Triple Alliance was mentioned with reverence in every debate; and the eyes of all men were turned towards the quiet orchard, where the author of that great league was amusing himself with reading and gardening.

Temple was ordered to attend the King, and was

charged with the office of negotiating a separate peace with Holland. The Spanish Ambassador to the Court of London had been empowered by the States-General to treat in their name. With him Temple came to a speedy agreement; and in three days a treaty was concluded.

The highest honours of the State were now within Temple's reach. After the retirement of Clifford, the white staff had been delivered to Thomas Osborne, soon after created Earl of Danby, who was related to Lady Temple, and had, many years earlier, travelled and played tennis with Sir William. Danby was an interested and dishonest man, but by no means destitute of abilities or of judgment. He was, indeed, a far better adviser than any in whom Charles had hitherto reposed confidence. Clarendon was a man of another generation, and did not in the least understand the society which he had to govern. The members of the Cabal were ministers of a foreign power, and enemies of the Established Church; and had in consequence raised against themselves and their master an irresistible storm of national and religious hatred. Danby wished to strengthen and extend the prerogative; but he had the sense to see that this could be done only by a complete change of system. He knew the English people and the House of Commons; and he knew that the course which Charles had recently taken, if obstinately pursued, might well end before the windows of the Banqueting-House. He saw that the true policy of the Crown was to ally itself, not with the feeble, the hated, the down-trodden Catholics, but with the powerful, the wealthy, the popular, the dominant Church of England; to trust for aid, not to a foreign Prince whose name was hateful to the British nation, and whose succours could be obtained only on terms of vassalage, but to the old Cavalier party, to

the landed gentry, the clergy, and the universities. By rallying round the throne the whole strength of the Royalists and High-Churchmen, and by using without stint all the resources of corruption, he flattered himself that he could manage the Parliament. That he failed is to be attributed less to himself than to his master. Of the disgraceful dealings which were still kept up with the French Court, Danby deserved little or none of the blame, though he suffered the whole punishment.

Danby, with great parliamentary talents, had paid little attention to European politics, and wished for the help of some person on whom he could rely in the foreign department. A plan was accordingly arranged for making Temple Secretary of State. Arlington was the only member of the Cabal who still held office in England. The temper of the House of Commons made it necessary to remove him, or rather to require him to sell out; for at that time the great offices of State were bought and sold as commissions in the army now are. Temple was informed that he should have the Seals if he would pay Arlington six thousand pounds. The transaction had nothing in it discreditable, according to the notions of that age, and the investment would have been a good one; for we imagine that at that time the gains which a Secretary of State might make, without doing any thing considered as improper, were very considerable. Temple's friends offered to lend him the money; but he was fully determined not to take a post of so much responsibility in times so agitated, and under a Prince on whom so little reliance could be placed, and accepted the embassy to the Hague, leaving Arlington to find another purchaser.

Before Temple left England he had a long audience of the King, to whom he spoke with great severity of

the measures adopted by the late Ministry. The King owned that things had turned out ill. "But," said he, "if I had been well served, I might have made a good business of it." Temple was alarmed at this language, and inferred from it that the system of the Cabal had not been abandoned, but only suspended. He therefore thought it his duty to go, as he expresses it, "to the bottom of the matter." He strongly represented to the King the impossibility of establishing either absolute government, or the Catholic religion in England; and concluded by repeating an observation which he had heard at Brussels from M. Gourville, a very intelligent Frenchman well known to Charles: "A king of England," said Gourville, "who is willing to be the man of his people, is the greatest king in the world, but if he wishes to be more, by heaven he is nothing at all!" The King betrayed some symptoms of impatience during this lecture; but at last he laid his hand kindly on Temple's shoulder, and said, "You are right, and so is Gourville; and I will be the man of my people."

With this assurance Temple repaired to the Hague in July, 1674. Holland was now secure, and France was surrounded on every side by enemies. Spain and the Empire were in arms for the purpose of compelling Louis to abandon all that he had acquired since the treaty of the Pyrenees. A congress for the purpose of putting an end to the war was opened at Nimeguen under the mediation of England in 1675; and to that congress Temple was deputed. The work of conciliation, however, went on very slowly. The belligerent powers were still sanguine, and the mediating power was unsteady and insincere.

In the meantime the Opposition in England became more and more formidable, and seemed fully determined to force the King into a war with France.

Charles was desirous of making some appointments which might strengthen the administration and conciliate the confidence of the public. No man was more esteemed by the nation than Temple; yet he had never been concerned in any opposition to any government. In July, 1677, he was sent for from Nimeguen. Charles received him with caresses, earnestly pressed him to accept the seals of Secretary of State, and promised to bear half the charge of buying out the present holder. Temple was charmed by the kindness and politeness of the King's manner, and by the liveliness of his Majesty's conversation; but his prudence was not to be so laid asleep. He calmly and steadily excused himself. The King affected to treat his excuses as mere jests, and gaily said, "Go; get you gone to Sheen. We shall have no good of you till you have been there; and when you have rested yourself, come up again." Temple withdrew, and staid two days at his villa, but returned to town in the same mind; and the King was forced to consent at least to a delay.

But while Temple thus carefully shunned the responsibility of bearing a part in the general direction of affairs, he gave a signal proof of that never-failing sagacity which enabled him to find out ways of distinguishing himself without risk. He had a principal share in bringing about an event which was at the time hailed with general satisfaction, and which subsequently produced consequences of the highest importance. This was the marriage of the Prince of Orange and the Lady Mary.

In the following year Temple returned to the Hague; and thence he was ordered, in the close of 1678, to repair to Nimeguen, for the purpose of signing the hollow and unsatisfactory treaty by which the distractions of Europe were for a short time suspended. He grumbled much at being required to

affix his name to bad articles which he had not framed, and still more at having to travel in very cold weather. After all, a difficulty of etiquette prevented him from signing, and he returned to the Hague. Scarcely had he arrived there when he received intelligence that the King, whose embarrassments were now far greater than ever, was fully resolved immediately to appoint him Secretary of State. He a third time declined that high post, and began to make preparations for a journey to Italy; thinking, doubtless, that he should spend his time much more pleasantly among pictures and ruins than in such a whirlpool of political and religious frenzy as was then raging in London.

But the King was in extreme necessity, and was no longer to be so easily put off. Temple received positive orders to repair instantly to England. He obeyed, and found the country in a state even more fearful than that which he had pictured to himself.

Those are terrible conjunctures, when the discontents of a nation, not light and capricious discontents, but discontents which have been steadily increasing during a long series of years, have attained their full maturity. The discerning few predict the approach of these conjunctures, but predict in vain. To the many, the evil season comes as a total eclipse of the sun at noon comes to a people of savages. Society which, but a short time before, was in a state of perfect repose, is on a sudden agitated with the most fearful convulsions, and seems to be on the verge of dissolution; and the rulers who, till the mischief was beyond the reach of all ordinary remedies, had never bestowed one thought on its existence stand bewildered and panic-stricken, without hope or resource, in the midst of the confusion. One such conjuncture this generation has seen. God grant that we may never see another! At such a con-

juncture it was that Temple landed on English ground in the beginning of 1679.

The Parliament had obtained a glimpse of the King's dealings with France; and their anger had been unjustly directed against Danby, whose conduct as to that matter had been, on the whole, deserving rather of praise than of censure. The Popish Plot, the murder of Godfrey, the infamous inventions of Oates, the discovery of Colman's letters, had excited the nation to madness. All the disaffection which had been generated by eighteen years of misgovernment had come to the birth together. At this moment the King had been advised to dissolve that Parliament which had been elected just after his restoration, and which, though its composition had since that time been greatly altered, was still far more deeply imbued with the old Cavalier spirit than any that had preceded, or that was likely to follow it. The general election had commenced, and was proceeding with a degree of excitement never before known. The tide ran furiously against the Court. It was clear that a majority of the new House of Commons would be, to use a word which came into fashion a few months later, decided Whigs. Charles had found it necessary to yield to the violence of the public feeling. The Duke of York was on the point of retiring to Holland. "I never," says Temple, who had seen the abolition of monarchy, the dissolution of the Long Parliament, the fall of the Protectorate, the declaration of Monk against the Rump, "I never saw greater disturbance in men's minds."

The King now with the utmost urgency besought Temple to take the seals. The pecuniary part of the arrangement no longer presented any difficulty; and Sir William was not quite so decided in his refusal as he had formerly been. He took three days to consider the posture of affairs, and to examine his own

feelings; and he came to the conclusion that "the scene was unfit for such an actor as he knew himself to be." Yet he felt that, by refusing help to the King at such a crisis, he might give much offence and incur much censure. He shaped his course with his usual dexterity. He affected to be very desirous of a seat in Parliament; yet he contrived to be an unsuccessful candidate; and, when all the writs were returned, he represented that it would be useless for him to take the seals till he could procure admittance to the House of Commons; and in this manner he succeeded in avoiding the greatness which others desired to thrust upon him.

The Parliament met; and the violence of its proceedings surpassed all expectation. The Long Parliament itself, with much greater provocation, had at its commencement been less violent. The Treasurer was instantly driven from office, impeached, sent to the Tower. Sharp and vehement votes were passed on the subject of the Popish Plot. The Commons were prepared to go much further, to wrest from the King his prerogative of mercy in cases of high political crimes, and to alter the succession to the Crown. Charles was thoroughly perplexed and dismayed. Temple saw him almost daily, and thought him impressed with a deep sense of his errors, and of the miserable state into which they had brought him. Their conferences became longer and more confidential: and Temple began to flatter himself with the hope that he might be able to reconcile parties at home as he had reconciled hostile States abroad; that he might be able to suggest a plan which should allay all heats, efface the memory of all past grievances, secure the nation from misgovernment, and protect the Crown against the encroachments of Parliament.

Temple's plan was that the existing Privy Council,

which consisted of fifty members, should be dissolved, that there should no longer be a small interior council, like that which is now designated as the Cabinet, that a new Privy Council of thirty members should be appointed, and that the King should pledge himself to govern by the constant advice of this body, to suffer all his affairs of every kind to be freely debated there, and not to reserve any part of the public business for a secret committee.

Fifteen of the members of this new council were to be great officers of State. The other fifteen were to be independent noblemen and gentlemen of the greatest weight in the country. In appointing them particular regard was to be had to the amount of their property. The whole annual income of the councillors was estimated at £300,000. The annual income of all the members of the House of Commons was not supposed to exceed £400,000. The appointment of wealthy councillors Temple describes as "a chief regard, necessary to this Constitution."

This plan was the subject of frequent conversation between the King and Temple. After a month passed in discussions to which no third person appears to have been privy Charles declared himself satisfied of the expediency of the proposed measure, and resolved to carry it into effect.

It is much to be regretted that Temple has left us no account of these conferences. Historians have, therefore, been left to form their own conjectures as to the object of this very extraordinary plan, "this Constitution," as Temple himself calls it. And we cannot say that any explanation which has yet been given seems to us quite satisfactory. Indeed, almost all the writers whom we have consulted appear to consider the change as merely a change of administration, and so considering it, they generally applaud it. Mr. Courtenay, who has evidently examined this

subject with more attention than has often been bestowed upon it, seems to think Temple's scheme very strange, unintelligible, and absurd. It is with very great diffidence that we offer our own solution of what we have always thought one of the great riddles of English history. We are strongly inclined to suspect that the appointment of the new Privy Council was really a much more remarkable event than has generally been supposed, and that what Temple had in view was to effect, under colour of a change of administration, a permanent change in the Constitution.

The plan, considered merely as a plan for the formation of a Cabinet, is so obviously inconvenient, that we cannot easily believe this to have been Temple's chief object. The number of the new Council alone would be a most serious objection. The largest cabinets of modern times have not, we believe, consisted of more than fifteen members. Even this number has generally been thought too large. The Marquess Wellesley, whose judgment on a question of executive administration is entitled to as much respect as that of any statesman that England ever produced, expressed, during the ministerial negotiations of the year 1812, his conviction that even thirteen was an inconveniently large number. But in a Cabinet of thirty members what chance could there be of finding unity, secrecy, expedition, any of the qualities which such a body ought to possess? If, indeed, the members of such a Cabinet were closely bound together by interest, if they all had a deep stake in the permanence of the Administration, if the majority were dependent on a small number of leading men, the thirty might perhaps act as a smaller number would act, though more slowly, more awkwardly, and with more risk of improper disclosures. But the Council which Temple proposed was so

framed that if, instead of thirty members, it had contained only ten, it would still have been the most unwieldy and discordant Cabinet that ever sat. One half of the members were to be persons holding no office, persons who had no motive to compromise their opinions, or to take any share of the responsibility of an unpopular measure, persons, therefore, who might be expected, as often as there might be a crisis requiring the most cordial co-operation, to draw off from the rest, and to throw every difficulty in the way of the public business. The circumstance that they were men of enormous private wealth only made the matter worse. The House of Commons is a checking body; and therefore it is desirable that it should, to a great extent, consist of men of independent fortune, who receive nothing and expect nothing from the Government. But with executive boards the case is quite different. Their business is not to check, but to act. The very same things, therefore, which are the virtues of Parliaments may be vices in Cabinets. We can hardly conceive a greater curse to the country than an Administration, the members of which should be as perfectly independent of each other, and as little under the necessity of making mutual concessions, as the representatives of London and Devonshire in the House of Commons are and ought to be. Now Temple's new Council was to contain fifteen members, who were to hold no offices, and the average amount of whose private estates was ten thousand pounds a year, an income which, in proportion to the wants of a man of rank of that period, was at least equal to thirty thousand a year in our time. Was it to be expected that such men would gratuitously take on themselves the labour and responsibility of Ministers, and the unpopularity which the best Ministers must sometimes be prepared to brave? Could there be any doubt that an Opposition would soon be

formed within the Cabinet itself, and that the consequence would be disunion, altercation, tardiness in operations, the divulging of secrets, everything most alien from the nature of an executive council?

Is it possible to imagine that considerations so grave and so obvious should have altogether escaped the notice of a man of Temple's sagacity and experience? One of two things appears to us to be certain, either that his project has been misunderstood, or that his talents for public affairs have been overrated.

We lean to the opinion that his project has been misunderstood. His new Council, as we have shown, would have been an exceedingly bad Cabinet. The inference which we are inclined to draw is this, that he meant his Council to serve some other purpose than that of a mere Cabinet. Barillon used four or five words which contain, we think, the key of the whole mystery. Mr. Courtenay calls them pithy words; but he does not, if we are right, apprehend their whole force. "Ce sont," said Barillon, "des États, non des conseils."

In order clearly to understand what we imagine to have been Temple's views, the reader must remember that the Government of England was at that moment, and had been during nearly eighty years, in a state of transition. A change, not the less real or the less extensive because disguised under ancient names and forms, was in constant progress. The theory of the Constitution, the fundamental laws which fix the powers of the three branches of the legislature, underwent no material change between the time of Elizabeth and the time of William the Third. The most celebrated laws of the seventeenth century on those subjects, the Petition of Right, the Declaration of Right, are purely declaratory. They purport to be merely recitals of the old polity of England. They do not establish free government as a salutary im-

provement, but claim it as an undoubted and immemorial inheritance. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that, during the period of which we speak, all the mutual relations of all the orders of the State did practically undergo an entire change. The letter of the law might be unaltered; but, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the power of the Crown was, in fact, decidedly predominant in the State; and at the end of that century the power of Parliament, and especially of the Lower House, had become, in fact, decidedly predominant. At the beginning of the century, the sovereign perpetually violated, with little or no opposition, the clear privileges of Parliament. At the close of the century, the Parliament had virtually drawn to itself just as much as it chose of the prerogative of the Crown. The sovereign retained the shadow of that authority of which the Tudors had held the substance. He had a legislative veto which he never ventured to exercise, a power of appointing Ministers whom an address of the Commons could at any moment force him to discard, a power of declaring war which, without Parliamentary support, could not be carried on for a single day. The Houses of Parliament were now not merely legislative assemblies, not merely checking assemblies. They were great Councils of State, whose voice, when loudly and firmly raised, was decisive on all questions of foreign and domestic policy. There was no part of the whole system of Government with which they had not power to interfere by advice equivalent to command; and, if they abstained from intermeddling with some departments of the executive administration, they were withheld from doing so only by their own moderation, and by the confidence which they reposed in the Ministers of the Crown. There is perhaps no other instance in history of a change so complete in the real constitution of an empire, unaccompanied by any

corresponding change in the theoretical constitution. The disguised transformation of the Roman commonwealth into a despotic monarchy, under the long administration of Augustus, is perhaps the nearest parallel.

This great alteration did not take place without strong and constant resistance on the part of the kings of the House of Stuart. Till 1642, that resistance was generally of an open, violent, and lawless nature. If the Commons refused supplies, the sovereign levied a benevolence. If the Commons impeached a favourite minister, the sovereign threw the chiefs of the Opposition into prison. Of these efforts to keep down the Parliament by despotic force, without the pretext of law, the last, the most celebrated, and the most wicked was the attempt to seize the five members. That attempt was the signal for civil war, and was followed by eighteen years of blood and confusion.

The days of trouble passed by; the exiles returned; the throne was again set up in its high place; the peerage and the hierarchy recovered their ancient splendour. The fundamental laws which had been recited in the Petition of Right were again solemnly recognised. The theory of the English constitution was the same on the day when the hand of Charles the Second was kissed by the kneeling Houses at Whitehall as on the day when his father set up the royal standard at Nottingham. There was a short period of doting fondness, a *hysterica passio* of loyal repentance and love. But emotions of this sort are transitory; and the interests on which depends the progress of great societies are permanent. The transport of reconciliation was soon over; and the old struggle recommenced.

The old struggle recommenced; but not precisely after the old fashion. The sovereign was not indeed

a man whom any common warning would have restrained from the grossest violations of law. But it was no common warning that he had received. All around him were the recent signs of the vengeance of an oppressed nation, the fields on which the noblest blood of the island had been poured forth, the castles shattered by the cannon of the Parliamentary armies, the hall where sat the stern tribunal to whose bar had been led, through lowering ranks of pikemen, the captive heir of a hundred kings, the stately pilasters before which the great execution had been so fearlessly done in the face of heaven and earth. The restored Prince, admonished by the fate of his father, never ventured to attack his Parliaments with open and arbitrary violence. It was at one time by means of the Parliament itself, at another time by means of the courts of law, that he attempted to regain for the Crown its old predominance. He began with great advantages. The Parliament of 1661 was called while the nation was still full of joy and tenderness. The great majority of the House of Commons were zealous royalists. All the means of influence which the patronage of the Crown afforded were used without limit. Bribery was reduced to a system. The King, when he could spare money from his pleasures for nothing else, could spare it for purposes of corruption. While the defence of the coasts was neglected, while ships rotted, while arsenals lay empty, while turbulent crowds of unpaid seamen swarmed in the streets of the seaports, something could still be scraped together in the Treasury for the members of the House of Commons. The gold of France was largely employed for the same purpose. Yet it was found, as indeed might have been foreseen, that there is a natural limit to the effect which can be produced by means like these. There is one thing which the most corrupt senates are unwilling to sell; and that is the

power which makes them worth buying. The same selfish motives which induced them to take a price for a particular vote induce them to oppose every measure of which the effect would be to lower the importance, and consequently the price, of their votes. About the income of their power, so to speak, they are quite ready to make bargains. But they are not easily persuaded to part with any fragment of the principal. It is curious to observe how, during the long continuance of this Parliament, the Pensionary Parliament as it was nicknamed by contemporaries, though every circumstance seemed to be favourable to the Crown, the power of the Crown was constantly sinking, and that of the Commons constantly rising. The meetings of the Houses were more frequent than in former reigns; their interference was more harassing to the Government than in former reigns; they had begun to make peace, to make war, to pull down, if they did not set up, administrations. Already a new class of statesmen had appeared, unheard of before that time, but common ever since. Under the Tudors and the earlier Stuarts, it was generally by courtly arts, or by official skill and knowledge, that a politician raised himself to power. From the time of Charles the Second down to our own days a different species of talent, parliamentary talent, has been the most valuable of all the qualifications of an English statesman. It has stood in the place of all other acquirements. It has covered ignorance, weakness, rashness, the most fatal maladministration. A great negotiator is nothing when compared with a great debater; and a Minister who can make a successful speech need trouble himself little about an unsuccessful expedition. This is the talent which has made judges without law, and diplomatists without French, which has sent to the Admiralty men who did not know the stern of a ship from her bowsprit, and to

the India Board men who did not know the difference between a rupee and a pagoda, which made a foreign secretary of Mr. Pitt, who, as George the Second said, had never opened Vattel, and which was very near making a Chancellor of the Exchequer of Mr. Sheridan, who could not work a sum in long division. This was the sort of talent which raised Clifford from obscurity to the head of affairs. To this talent Osborne, by birth a simple country gentleman, owed his white staff, his garter, and his dukedom. The encroachment of the power of the Parliament on the power of the Crown resembled a fatality, or the operation of some great law of nature. The will of the individual on the throne, or of the individuals in the two Houses, seemed to go for nothing. The King might be eager to encroach; yet something constantly drove him back. The Parliament might be loyal, even servile; yet something constantly urged them forward.

These things were done in the green tree. What then was likely to be done in the dry? The Popish Plot and the general election came together, and found a people predisposed to the most violent excitation. The composition of the House of Commons was changed. The Legislature was filled with men who leaned to Republicanism in politics, and to Presbyterianism in religion. They no sooner met than they commenced an attack on the Government which, if successful, must have made them supreme in the State.

Where was this to end? To us who have seen the solution the question presents few difficulties. But to a statesman of the age of Charles the Second, to a statesman who wished, without depriving the Parliament of its privileges, to maintain the monarch in his old supremacy, it must have appeared very perplexing.

Clarendon had, when Minister, struggled, honestly, perhaps, but, as was his wont, obstinately, proudly, and offensively, against the growing power of the Commons. He was for allowing them their old authority, and not one atom more. He would never have claimed for the Crown a right to levy taxes from the people without the consent of Parliament. But when the Parliament, in the first Dutch war, most properly insisted on knowing how it was that the money which they had voted had produced so little effect, and began to inquire through what hands it had passed, and on what services it had been expended, Clarendon considered this as a monstrous innovation. He told the King, as he himself says, "that he could not be too indulgent in the defence of the privileges of Parliament, and that he hoped he would never violate any of them; but he desired him to be equally solicitous to prevent the excesses in Parliament, and not to suffer them to extend their jurisdiction to cases they have nothing to do with; and that to restrain them within their proper bounds and limits is as necessary as it is to preserve them from being invaded; and that this was such a new encroachment as had no bottom." This is a single instance. Others might easily be given.

The bigotry, the strong passions, the haughty and disdainful temper, which made Clarendon's great abilities a source of almost unmixed evil to himself and to the public, had no place in the character of Temple. To Temple, however, as well as to Clarendon, the rapid change which was taking place in the real working of the Constitution gave great disquiet; particularly as Temple had never sat in the English Parliament, and therefore regarded it with none of the predilection which men naturally feel for a body to which they belong, and for a theatre

on which their own talents have been advantageously displayed.

To wrest by force from the House of Commons its newly acquired powers was impossible; nor was Temple a man to recommend such a stroke, even if it had been possible. But was it possible that the House of Commons might be induced to let those powers drop? Was it possible that, as a great revolution had been effected without any change in the outward form of the Government, so a great counter-revolution might be effected in the same manner? Was it possible that the Crown and the Parliament might be placed in nearly the same relative position in which they had stood in the reign of Elizabeth, and that this might be done without one sword drawn, without one execution, and with the general acquiescence of the nation?

The English people—it was probably thus that Temple argued—will not bear to be governed by the unchecked power of the sovereign, nor ought they to be so governed. At present there is no check but the Parliament. The limits which separate the power of checking those who govern from the power of governing are not easily to be defined. The Parliament, therefore, supported by the nation, is rapidly drawing to itself all the powers of Government. If it were possible to frame some other check on the power of the Crown, some check which might be less galling to the sovereign than that by which he is now constantly tormented, and yet which might appear to the people to be a tolerable security against maladministration, Parliaments would probably meddle less; and they would be less supported by public opinion in their meddling. That the King's hands may not be rudely tied by others, he must consent to tie them lightly himself. That the executive administration may not be usurped by the checking

body, something of the character of a checking body must be given to the body which conducts the executive administration. The Parliament is now arrogating to itself every day a larger share of the functions of the Privy Council. We must stop the evil by giving to the Privy Council something of the constitution of a Parliament. Let the nation see that all the King's measures are directed by a Cabinet composed of representatives of every order in the State, by a Cabinet which contains, not placemen alone, but independent and popular noblemen and gentlemen who have large estates and no salaries, and who are not likely to sacrifice the public welfare in which they have a deep stake, and the credit which they have obtained with the country, to the pleasure of a Court from which they receive nothing. When the ordinary administration is in such hands as these, the people will be quite content to see the Parliament become, what it formerly was, an extraordinary check. They will be quite willing that the House of Commons should meet only once in three years for a short session, and should take as little part in matters of state as it did a hundred years ago.

Thus we believe that Temple reasoned: for on this hypothesis his scheme is intelligible; and on any other hypothesis his scheme appears to us, as it does to Mr. Courtenay, exceedingly absurd and unmeaning. This Council was strictly what Barillon called it, an Assembly of States. There are the representatives of all the great sections of the community, of the Church, of the law, of the Peerage, of the Commons. The exclusion of one half of the councillors from office under the Crown, an exclusion which is quite absurd when we consider the Council merely as an executive board, becomes at once perfectly reasonable when we consider the Council as a body intended to restrain the Crown as well as to

exercise the powers of the Crown, to perform some of the functions of a Parliament as well as the functions of a Cabinet. We see, too, why Temple dwelt so much on the private wealth of the members, why he instituted a comparison between their united incomes and the united incomes of the members of the House of Commons. Such a parallel would have been idle in the case of a mere Cabinet. It is extremely significant in the case of a body intended to supersede the House of Commons in some very important functions.

We can hardly help thinking that the notion of this Parliament on a small scale was suggested to Temple by what he had himself seen in the United Provinces. The original Assembly of the States-General consisted, as he tells us, of above eight hundred persons. But this great body was represented by a smaller Council of about thirty, which bore the name and exercised the powers of the States-General. At last the real States altogether ceased to meet; and their power, though still a part of the theory of the Constitution, became obsolete in practice. We do not, of course, imagine that Temple either expected or wished that Parliaments should be thus disused; but he did expect, we think, that something like what had happened in Holland would happen in England, and that a large portion of the functions lately assumed by Parliament would be quietly transferred to the miniature Parliament which he proposed to create.

Had this plan, with some modifications, been tried at an earlier period, in a more composed state of the public mind, and by a better sovereign, we are by no means certain that it might not have effected the purpose for which it was designed. The restraint imposed on the King by the Council of Thirty, whom he had himself chosen, would have been feeble indeed

when compared with the restraint imposed by Parliament. But it would have been more constant. It would have acted every year, and all the year round; and before the Revolution the sessions of Parliament were short and the recesses long. The advice of the Council would probably have prevented any very monstrous and scandalous measures; and would consequently have prevented the discontents which follow such measures, and the salutary laws which are the fruit of such discontents. We believe, for example, that the second Dutch war would never have been approved by such a Council as that which Temple proposed. We are quite certain that the shutting up of the Exchequer would never even have been mentioned in such a Council. The people, pleased to think that Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and Mr. Powle, unplaced and unpensioned, were daily representing their grievances and defending their rights in the Royal presence, would not have pined quite so much for the meeting of Parliaments. The Parliament, when it met, would have found fewer and less glaring abuses to attack. There would have been less misgovernment and less reform. We should not have been cursed with the Cabal, or blessed with the Habeas Corpus Act. In the meantime the Council, considered as an executive Council, would, unless some at least of its powers had been delegated to a smaller body, have been feeble, dilatory, divided, unfit for everything which requires secrecy and despatch, and peculiarly unfit for the administration of war.

The Revolution put an end, in a very different way, to the long contest between the King and the Parliament. From that time the House of Commons has been predominant in the State. The Cabinet has really been, from that time, a committee nominated by the Crown out of the prevailing party in Parliament. Though the minority in the Commons are

constantly proposing to condemn executive measures, or to call for papers which may enable the House to sit in judgment on such measures, these propositions are scarcely ever carried ; and, if a proposition of this kind is carried against the Government, a change of Ministry almost necessarily follows. Growing and struggling power always gives more annoyance and is more unmanageable than established power. The House of Commons gave infinitely more trouble to the Ministers of Charles the Second than to any Ministers of later times ; for, in the time of Charles the Second, the House was checking Ministers in whom it did not confide. Now that its ascendency is fully established, it either confides in Ministers or turns them out. This is undoubtedly a far better state of things than that which Temple wished to introduce. The modern Cabinet is a far better Executive Council than his. The worst House of Commons that has sate since the Revolution was a far more efficient check on misgovernment than his fifteen independent councillors would have been. Yet, every thing considered, it seems to us that his plan was the work of an observant, ingenious, and fertile mind.

On this occasion, as on every occasion on which he came prominently forward, Temple had the rare good fortune to please the public as well as the Sovereign. The general exultation was great when it was known that the old Council, made up of the most odious tools of power, was dismissed, that small interior committees, rendered odious by the recent memory of the Cabal, were to be disused, and that the King would adopt no measure till it had been discussed and approved by a body, of which one half consisted of independent gentlemen and noblemen, and in which such persons as Russell, Cavendish, and Temple himself had seats. Town and country were

in a ferment of joy. The bells were rung; bonfires were lighted; and the acclamations of England were echoed by the Dutch, who considered the influence obtained by Temple as a certain omen of good for Europe. It is, indeed, much to the honour of his sagacity that every one of his great measures should, in such times, have pleased every party which he had any interest in pleasing. This was the case with the Triple Alliance, with the treaty which concluded the second Dutch war, with the marriage of the Prince of Orange, and, finally, with the institution of this new Council.

The only people who grumbled were those popular leaders of the House of Commons who were not among the Thirty; and, if our view of the measure be correct, they were precisely the people who had good reason to grumble. They were precisely the people whose activity and whose influence the new Council was intended to destroy.

But there was very soon an end of the bright hopes and loud applauses with which the publication of this scheme had been hailed. The perfidious levity of the King and the ambition of the chiefs of parties produced the instant, entire, and irremediable failure of a plan which nothing but firmness, public spirit, and self-denial, on the part of all concerned in it could conduct to a happy issue. Even before the project was divulged, its author had already found reason to apprehend that it would fail. Considerable difficulty was experienced in framing the list of councillors. There were two men in particular about whom the King and Temple could not agree, two men deeply tainted with the vices common to the English statesmen of that age, but unrivalled in talents, address, and influence. These were the Earl of Shaftesbury, and George Savile Viscount Halifax.

It was a favourite exercise among the Greek

sophists to write panegyrics on characters proverbial for depravity. One professor of rhetoric sent to Isocrates a panegyric on Busiris; and Isocrates himself wrote another which has come down to us. It is, we presume, from an ambition of the same kind that some writers have lately shown a disposition to eulogize Shaftesbury. But the attempt is vain. The charges against him rest on evidence not to be invalidated by any arguments which human wit can devise, or by any information which may be found in old trunks and escritoires.

It is certain that, just before the Restoration, he declared to the Regicides that he would be damned, body and soul, rather than suffer a hair of their heads to be hurt, and that, just after the Restoration, he was one of the judges who sentenced them to death. It is certain that he was a principal member of the most profligate Administration ever known, and that he was afterwards a principal member of the most profligate Opposition ever known. It is certain that, in power, he did not scruple to violate the great fundamental principle of the Constitution, in order to exalt the Catholics, and that, out of power, he did not scruple to violate every principle of justice, in order to destroy them. There were in that age some honest men, such as William Penn, who valued toleration so highly that they would willingly have seen it established even by an illegal exertion of the prerogative. There were many honest men who dreaded arbitrary power so much that, on account of the alliance between Popery and arbitrary power, they were disposed to grant no toleration to Papists. On both those classes we look with indulgence, though we think both in the wrong. But Shaftesbury belonged to neither class. He united all that was worst in both. From the misguided friends of toleration he borrowed their contempt for

the Constitution, and from the misguided friends of civil liberty their contempt for the rights of conscience. We never can admit that his conduct as a member of the Cabal was redeemed by his conduct as a leader of Opposition. On the contrary, his life was such that every part of it, as if by a skilful contrivance, reflects infamy on every other. We should never have known how abandoned a prostitute he was in place, if we had not known how desperate an incendiary he was out of it. To judge of him fairly, we must bear in mind that the Shaftesbury who, in office, was the chief author of the Declaration of Indulgence, was the same Shaftesbury who, out of office, excited and kept up the savage hatred of the rabble of London against the very class to whom that Declaration of Indulgence was intended to give illegal relief.

It is amusing to see the excuses that are made for him. We will give two specimens. It is acknowledged that he was one of the Ministry which made the alliance with France against Holland, and that this alliance was most pernicious. What, then, is the defence? Even this, that he betrayed his master's counsels to the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, and tried to rouse all the Protestant powers of Germany to defend the States. Again, it is acknowledged that he was deeply concerned in the Declaration of Indulgence, and that his conduct on this occasion was not only unconstitutional, but quite inconsistent with the course which he afterwards took respecting the professors of the Catholic faith. What, then, is the defence? Even this, that he meant only to allure concealed Papists to avow themselves, and thus to become open marks for the vengeance of the public. As often as he is charged with one treason, his advocates vindicate him by confessing two. They had better leave him where

they find him. For him there is no escape upwards. Every outlet by which he can creep out of his present position is one which lets him down into a still lower and fouler depth of infamy, To whitewash an Ethiopian is a proverbially hopeless attempt; but to whitewash an Ethiopian by giving him a new coat of blacking is an enterprise more extraordinary still. That in the course of Shaftesbury's dishonest and revengeful opposition to the Court he rendered one or two most useful services to his country we admit. And he is, we think, fairly entitled, if that be any glory, to have his name eternally associated with the Habeas Corpus Act in the same way in which the name of Henry the Eighth is associated with the reformation of the Church, and that of Jack Wilkes with the most sacred rights of electors.

While Shaftesbury was still living, his character was elaborately drawn by two of the greatest writers of the age, by Butler, with characteristic brilliancy of wit, by Dryden, with even more than characteristic energy and loftiness, by both with all the inspiration of hatred. The sparkling illustrations of Butler have been thrown into the shade by the brighter glory of that gorgeous satiric Muse, who comes sweeping by in sceptred pall, borrowed from her more august sisters. But the descriptions well deserve to be compared. The reader will at once perceive a considerable difference between Butler's

> "politician,
> With more heads than a beast in vision,"

and the Achitophel of Dryden. Butler dwells on Shaftesbury's unprincipled versatility; on his wonderful and almost instinctive skill in discerning the approach of a change of fortune; and on the

dexterity with which he extricated himself from the snares in which he left his associates to perish.

"Our state-artificer foresaw,
Which way the world began to draw.
For as old sinners have all points
O' th' compass in their bones and joints,
Can by their pangs and aches find
All turns and changes of the wind.
And better than by Napier's bones
Feel in their own the age of moons,
So guilty sinners in a state
Can by their crimes prognosticate,
And in their consciences feel pain
Some days before a shower of rain.
He, therefore, wisely cast about
All ways he could to ensure his throat."

In Dryden's great portrait, on the contrary, violent passion, implacable revenge, boldness amounting to temerity, are the most striking features. Achitophel is one of the "great wits to madness near allied." And again—

"A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit."[1]

[1] It has never, we believe, been remarked, that two of the most striking lines in the description of Achitophel are borrowed from a most obscure quarter. In Knolles's History of the Turks, printed more than sixty years before the appearance of Absalom and Achitophel, are the following verses, under a portrait of the Sultan Mustapha the First:—

"Greatnesse on goodnesse loves to slide, not stand,
And leaves for Fortune's ice Vertue's firme land."

Dryden's words are—

"But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land."

The circumstance is the more remarkable, because Dryden has really no couplet which would seem to a good critic more intensely

The dates of the two poems will, we think, explain this discrepancy. The third part of Hudibras appeared in 1678, when the character of Shaftesbury had as yet but imperfectly developed itself. He had, indeed, been a traitor to every party in the State; but his treasons had hitherto prospered. Whether it were accident or sagacity, he had timed his desertions in such a manner that fortune seemed to go to and fro with him from side to side. The extent of his perfidy was known; but it was not till the Popish Plot furnished him with a machinery which seemed sufficiently powerful for all his purposes, that the audacity of his spirit, and the fierceness of his malevolent passions, became fully manifest. His subsequent conduct showed undoubtedly great ability, but not ability of the sort for which he had formerly been so eminent. He was now headstrong, sanguine, full of impetuous confidence in his own wisdom and his own good luck. He, whose fame as a political tactician had hitherto rested chiefly on his skilful retreats, now set himself to break down all the bridges behind him. His plans were castles in the air: his talk was rodomontade. He took no thought for the morrow: he treated the Court as if the King were already a prisoner in his hands: he built on the favour of the multitude, as if that favour were not proverbially inconstant. The signs of the coming reaction were discerned by men of far less sagacity than his, and scared from his side men more consistent than he had ever pretended to be. But on him they were lost. The counsel of Achitophel, that counsel which was as if a man had

Drydenian, both in thought and expression, than this, of which the whole thought, and almost the whole expression, are stolen.

As we are on this subject, we cannot refrain from observing that Mr. Courtenay has done Dryden injustice, by inadvertently attributing to him some feeble lines which are in Tate's part of Absalom and Achitophel.

inquired of the oracle of God, was turned into foolishness. He who had become a byword, for the certainty with which he foresaw and the suppleness with which he evaded danger, now, when beset on every side with snares and death, seemed to be smitten with a blindness as strange as his former clear-sightedness, and, turning neither to the right nor to the left, strode straight on with desperate hardihood to his doom. Therefore, after having early acquired and long preserved the reputation of infallible wisdom and invariable success, he lived to see a mighty ruin wrought by his own ungovernable passions, to see the great party which he had led vanquished, and scattered, and trampled down, to see all his own devilish enginery of lying witnesses, partial sheriffs, packed juries, unjust judges, bloodthirsty mobs, ready to be employed against himself and his most devoted followers, to fly from that proud city whose favour had almost raised him to be Mayor of the Palace, to hide himself in squalid retreats, to cover his grey head with ignominious disguises; and he died in hopeless exile, sheltered, by the generosity of a State which he had cruelly injured and insulted, from the vengeance of a master whose favour he had purchased by one series of crimes, and forfeited by another.

Halifax had, in common with Shaftesbury, and with almost all the politicians of that age, a very loose morality where the public was concerned; but in Halifax the prevailing infection was modified by a very peculiar constitution both of heart and head, by a temper singularly free from gall, and by a refining and sceptical understanding. He changed his course as often as Shaftesbury; but he did not change it to the same extent, or in the same direction. Shaftesbury was the very reverse of a trimmer. His disposition led him generally to do

his utmost to exalt the side which was up, and to depress the side which was down. His transitions were from extreme to extreme. While he stayed with a party he went all lengths for it: when he quitted it he went all lengths against it. Halifax was emphatically a trimmer; a trimmer both by intellect and by constitution. The name was fixed on him by his contemporaries; and he was so far from being ashamed of it that he assumed it as a badge of honour. He passed from faction to faction. But, instead of adopting and inflaming the passions of those whom he joined, he tried to diffuse among them something of the spirit of those whom he had just left. While he acted with the Opposition he was suspected of being a spy of the Court; and when he had joined the Court all the Tories were dismayed by his Republican doctrines.

He wanted neither arguments nor eloquence to exhibit what was commonly regarded as his wavering policy in the fairest light. He trimmed, he said, as the temperate zone trims between intolerable heat and intolerable cold, as a good government trims between despotism and anarchy, as a pure church trims between the errors of the Papist and those of the Anabaptist. Nor was this defence by any means without weight; for, though there is abundant proof that his integrity was not of strength to withstand the temptations by which his cupidity and vanity were sometimes assailed, yet his dislike of extremes, and a forgiving and compassionate temper which seems to have been natural to him, preserved him from all participation in the worst crimes of his time. If both parties accused him of deserting them, both were compelled to admit that they had great obligations to his humanity, and that, though an uncertain friend, he was a placable enemy. He voted in favour of Lord Stafford, the victim of the Whigs: he did

his utmost to save Lord Russell, the victim of the Tories; and, on the whole, we are inclined to think that his public life, though far indeed from faultless, has as few great stains as that of any politician who took an active part in affairs during the troubled and disastrous period of ten years which elapsed between the fall of Lord Danby and the Revolution.

His mind was much less turned to particular observations, and much more to general speculations, than that of Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury knew the King, the Council, the Parliament, the city, better than Halifax; but Halifax would have written a far better treatise on political science than Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury shone more in consultation, and Halifax in controversy: Shaftesbury was more fertile in expedients, and Halifax in arguments. Nothing that remains from the pen of Shaftesbury will bear a comparison with the political tracts of Halifax. Indeed, very little of the prose of that age is so well worth reading as the Character of a Trimmer and the Anatomy of an Equivalent. What particularly strikes us in those works is the writer's passion for generalisation. He was treating of the most exciting subjects in the most agitated times: he was himself placed in the very thick of the civil conflict; yet there is no acrimony, nothing inflammatory, nothing personal. He preserves an air of cold superiority, a certain philosophical serenity, which is perfectly marvellous. He treats every question as an abstract question, begins with the widest propositions, argues those propositions on general grounds, and often, when he has brought out his theorem, leaves the reader to make the application, without adding an allusion to particular men or to passing events. This speculative turn of mind rendered him a bad adviser in cases which required celerity. He brought forward, with wonderful readiness and copiousness, arguments,

replies to those arguments, rejoinders to those replies, general maxims of policy, and analogous cases from history. But Shaftesbury was the man for a prompt decision. Of the parliamentary eloquence of these celebrated rivals, we can judge only by report; and, so judging, we should be inclined to think that though Shaftesbury was a distinguished speaker, the superiority belonged to Halifax. Indeed the readiness of Halifax in debate, the extent of his knowledge, the ingenuity of his reasoning, the liveliness of his expression, and the silver clearness and sweetness of his voice, seem to have made the strongest impression on his contemporaries. By Dryden he is described as

> "of piercing wit and pregnant thought,
> Endued by nature and by learning taught
> To move assemblies."

His oratory is utterly and irretrievably lost to us, like that of Somers, of Bolingbroke, of Charles Townshend, of many others who were accustomed to rise amidst the breathless expectation of senates, and to sit down amidst reiterated bursts of applause. But old men who lived to admire the eloquence of Pulteney in its meridian, and that of Pitt in its splendid dawn, still murmured that they had heard nothing like the great speeches of Lord Halifax on the Exclusion Bill. The power of Shaftesbury over large masses was unrivalled. Halifax was disqualified by his whole character, moral and intellectual, for the part of a demagogue. It was in small circles, and, above all, in the House of Lords, that his ascendency was felt.

Shaftesbury seems to have troubled himself very little about theories of government. Halifax was, in speculation, a strong republican, and did not conceal it. He often made hereditary monarchy and

aristocracy the subjects of his keen pleasantry, while he was fighting the battles of the Court, and obtaining for himself step after step in the peerage. In this way, he tried to gratify at once his intellectual vanity and his more vulgar ambition. He shaped his life according to the opinion of the multitude, and indemnified himself by talking according to his own. His colloquial powers were great; his perception of the ridiculous exquisitely fine; and he seems to have had the rare art of preserving the reputation of good breeding and good nature, while habitually indulging a strong propensity to mockery.

Temple wished to put Halifax into the new Council, and to leave out Shaftesbury. The King objected strongly to Halifax, to whom he had taken a great dislike, which is not accounted for, and which did not last long. Temple replied that Halifax was a man eminent both by his station and by his abilities, and would, if excluded, do every thing against the new arrangement that could be done by eloquence, sarcasm, and intrigue. All who were consulted were of the same mind; and the King yielded, but not till Temple had almost gone on his knees. This point was no sooner settled than his Majesty declared that he would have Shaftesbury too. Temple again had recourse to entreaties and expostulations. Charles told him that the enmity of Shaftesbury would be at least as formidable as that of Halifax; and this was true; but Temple might have replied that by giving power to Halifax they gained a friend, and that by giving power to Shaftesbury, they only strengthened an enemy. It was vain to argue and protest. The King only laughed and jested at Temple's anger; and Shaftesbury was not only sworn of the Council, but appointed Lord President.

Temple was so bitterly mortified by this step that he had at one time resolved to have nothing to do

with the new Administration, and seriously thought of disqualifying himself from sitting in council by omitting to take the Sacrament. But the urgency of Lady Temple and Lady Giffard induced him to abandon that intention.

The Council was organised on the twenty-first of April, 1679: and, within a few hours, one of the fundamental principles on which it had been constructed was violated. A secret committee, or, in the modern phrase, a cabinet of nine members, was formed. But, as this committee included Shaftesbury and Monmouth, it contained within itself the elements of as much faction as would have sufficed to impede all business. Accordingly there soon arose a small interior cabinet, consisting of Essex, Sunderland, Halifax, and Temple. For a time perfect harmony and confidence subsisted between the four. But the meetings of the thirty were stormy. Sharp retorts passed between Shaftesbury and Halifax, who led the opposite parties. In the Council Halifax generally had the advantage. But it soon became apparent that Shaftesbury still had at his back the majority of the House of Commons. The discontents which the change of Ministry had for a moment quieted broke forth again with redoubled violence; and the only effect which the late measures appeared to have produced was that the Lord President, with all the dignity and authority belonging to his high place, stood at the head of the Opposition. The impeachment of Lord Danby was eagerly prosecuted. The Commons were determined to exclude the Duke of York from the throne. All offers of compromise were rejected. It must not be forgotten, however, that, in the midst of the confusion, one inestimable law, the only benefit which England has derived from the troubles of that period, but a benefit which may well be set off against a great mass of evil, the

Habeas Corpus Act, was pushed through the Houses and received the royal assent.

The King, finding the Parliament as troublesome as ever, determined to prorogue it; and he did so without even mentioning his intention to the Council by whose advice he had pledged himself, only a month before, to conduct the Government. The councillors were generally dissatisfied; and Shaftesbury swore with great vehemence, that, if he could find out who the secret advisers were, he would have their heads.

The Parliament rose; London was deserted; and Temple retired to his villa, whence, on council days, he went to Hampton Court. The post of Secretary was again and again pressed on him by his master and by his three colleagues of the inner Cabinet. Halifax, in particular, threatened laughingly to burn down the house at Sheen. But Temple was immovable. His short experience of English politics had disgusted him; and he felt himself so much oppressed by the responsibility under which he at present lay that he had no inclination to add to the load.

When the term fixed for the prorogation had nearly expired, it became necessary to consider what course should be taken. The King and his four confidential advisers thought that a new Parliament might possibly be more manageable, and could not possibly be more refractory, than that which they now had, and they therefore determined on a dissolution. But when the question was proposed at council, the majority, jealous, it should seem, of the small directing knot, and unwilling to bear the unpopularity of the measures of Government, while excluded from all power, joined Shaftesbury, and the members of the Cabinet were left alone in the minority. The King, however, had made up his

mind, and ordered the Parliament to be instantly dissolved. Temple's council was now nothing more than an ordinary privy council, if indeed it were not something less; and though Temple threw the blame of this on the King, on Lord Shaftesbury, on every body but himself, it is evident that the failure of his plan is to be chiefly ascribed to its own inherent defects. His council was too large to transact business which required expedition, secrecy, and cordial co-operation. A Cabinet was therefore formed within the Council. The Cabinet and the majority of the Council differed; and, as was to be expected, the Cabinet carried their point. Four votes outweighed six-and-twenty. This being the case, the meetings of the thirty were not only useless, but positively noxious.

At the ensuing election, Temple was chosen for the University of Cambridge. The only objection that was made to him by the members of that learned body was that, in his little work on Holland, he had expressed great approbation of the tolerant policy of the States; and this blemish, however serious, was overlooked, in consideration of his high reputation, and of the strong recommendations with which he was furnished by the Court.

During the summer he remained at Sheen, and amused himself with rearing melons, leaving to the three other members of the inner Cabinet the whole direction of public affairs. Some unexplained cause began, about this time, to alienate them from him. They do not appear to have been made angry by any part of his conduct, or to have disliked him personally. But they had, we suspect, taken the measure of his mind, and satisfied themselves that he was not a man for that troubled time, and that he would be a mere incumbrance to them. Living themselves for ambition, they despised his love of

ease. Accustomed to deep stakes in the game of political hazard, they despised his piddling play. They looked on his cautious measures with the sort of scorn with which the gamblers at the ordinary, in Sir Walter Scott's novel, regarded Nigel's practice of never touching a card but when he was certain to win. He soon found that he was left out of their secrets. The King had, about this time, a dangerous attack of illness. The Duke of York, on receiving the news, returned from Holland. The sudden appearance of the detested Popish successor excited anxiety throughout the country. Temple was greatly amazed and disturbed. He hastened up to London and visited Essex, who professed to be astonished and mortified, but could not disguise a sneering smile. Temple then saw Halifax, who talked to him much about the pleasures of the country, the anxieties of office, and the vanity of all human things, but carefully avoided politics, and when the Duke's return was mentioned, only sighed, shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and lifted up his eyes and hands. In a short time Temple found that his two friends had been laughing at him, and that they had themselves sent for the Duke, in order that his Royal Highness might, if the King should die, be on the spot to frustrate the designs of Monmouth.

He was soon convinced, by a still stronger proof, that, though he had not exactly offended his master or his colleagues in the Cabinet, he had ceased to enjoy their confidence. The result of the general election had been decidedly unfavourable to the Government; and Shaftesbury impatiently expected the day when the Houses were to meet. The King, guided by the advice of the inner Cabinet, determined on a step of the highest importance. He told the Council that he had resolved to prorogue the new Parliament for a year, and requested them not

to object; for he had, he said, considered the subject fully, and had made up his mind. All who were not in the secret were thunderstruck, Temple as much as any. Several members rose, and entreated to be heard against the prorogation. But the King silenced them, and declared that his resolution was unalterable. Temple, much hurt at the manner in which both himself and the Council had been treated, spoke with great spirit. He would not, he said, disobey the King by objecting to a measure on which his Majesty was determined to hear no argument; but he would most earnestly entreat his Majesty, if the present Council was incompetent to give advice, to dissolve it and select another; for it was absurd to have councillors who did not counsel, and who were summoned only to be silent witnesses of the acts of others. The King listened courteously. But the members of the Cabinet resented this reproof highly; and from that day Temple was almost as much estranged from them as from Shaftesbury.

He wished to retire altogether from business. But just at this time Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and some other councillors of the popular party, waited on the King in a body, declared their strong disapprobation of his measures, and requested to be excused from attending any more at council. Temple feared that if, at this moment, he also were to withdraw, he might be supposed to act in concert with those decided opponents of the Court, and to have determined on taking a course hostile to the Government. He, therefore, continued to go occasionally to the board; but he had no longer any real share in the direction of public affairs.

At length the long term of the prorogation expired. In October, 1680, the Houses met; and the great question of the Exclusion was revived. Few parliamentary contests in our history appear to have

called forth a greater display of talent; none certainly ever called forth more violent passions. The whole nation was convulsed by party spirit. The gentlemen of every county, the traders of every town, the boys of every public school, were divided into exclusionists and abhorrers. The book-stalls were covered with tracts on the sacredness of hereditary right, on the omnipotence of Parliament, on the dangers of a disputed succession, on the dangers of a Popish reign. It was in the midst of this ferment that Temple took his seat, for the first time, in the House of Commons.

The occasion was a very great one. His talents, his long experience of affairs, his unspotted public character, the high posts which he had filled, seemed to mark him out as a man on whom much would depend. He acted like himself. He saw that, if he supported the Exclusion, he made the King and the heir presumptive his enemies, and that, if he opposed it, he made himself an object of hatred to the unscrupulous and turbulent Shaftesbury. He neither supported nor opposed it. He quietly absented himself from the House. Nay, he took care, he tells us, never to discuss the question in any society whatever. Lawrence Hyde, afterwards Earl of Rochester, asked him why he did not attend in his place. Temple replied that he acted according to Solomon's advice, neither to oppose the mighty, nor to go about to stop the current of a river. Hyde answered, "You are a wise and a quiet man." And this might be true. But surely such wise and quiet men have no call to be members of Parliament in critical times.

A single session was quite enough for Temple. When the Parliament was dissolved, and another summoned at Oxford, he obtained an audience of the King, and begged to know whether his Majesty

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

From the original painting by Sir Peter Lely in the National Portrait Gallery.

wished him to continue in Parliament. Charles, who had a singularly quick eye for the weaknesses of all who came near him, had no doubt seen through Temple, and rated the parliamentary support of so cool and guarded a friend at its proper value. He answered good-naturedly, but we suspect a little contemptuously, "I doubt, as things stand, your coming into the House will not do much good. I think you may as well let it alone." Sir William accordingly informed his constituents that he should not again apply for their suffrages, and set off for Sheen, resolving never again to meddle with public affairs. He soon found that the King was displeased with him. Charles, indeed, in his usual easy way, protested that he was not angry, not at all. But in a few days he struck Temple's name out of the list of Privy Councillors. Why this was done Temple declares himself unable to comprehend. But surely it hardly required his long and extensive converse with the world to teach him that there are conjunctures when men think that all who are not with them are against them, that there are conjunctures when a lukewarm friend, who will not put himself the least out of his way, who will make no exertion, who will run no risk, is more distasteful than an enemy. Charles had hoped that the fair character of Temple would add credit to an unpopular and suspected Government. But his Majesty soon found that this fair character resembled pieces of furniture which we have seen in the drawing rooms of very precise old ladies, and which are a great deal too white to be used. This exceeding niceness was altogether out of season. Neither party wanted a man who was afraid of taking a part, of incurring abuse, of making enemies. There were probably many good and moderate men who would have hailed the appearance of a respectable mediator.

But Temple was not a mediator. He was merely a neutral.

At last, however, he had escaped from public life, and found himself at liberty to follow his favourite pursuits. His fortune was easy. He had about fifteen hundred a year, besides the Mastership of the Rolls in Ireland, an office in which he had succeeded his father, and which was then a mere sinecure for life, requiring no residence. His reputation both as a negotiator and a writer stood high. He resolved to be safe, to enjoy himself, and to let the world take its course; and he kept his resolution.

Darker times followed. The Oxford Parliament was dissolved. The Tories were triumphant. A terrible vengeance was inflicted on the chiefs of the Opposition. Temple learned in his retreat the disastrous fate of several of his old colleagues in council. Shaftesbury fled to Holland. Russell died on the scaffold. Essex added a yet sadder and more fearful story to the bloody chronicles of the Tower. Monmouth clung in agonies of supplication round the knees of the stern uncle whom he had wronged, and tasted a bitterness worse than that of death, the bitterness of knowing that he had humbled himself in vain. A tyrant trampled on the liberties and religion of the realm. The national spirit swelled high under the oppression. Disaffection spread even to the strongholds of royalty, to the cloisters of Westminster, to the schools of Oxford, to the guard-room of the household troops, to the very hearth and bed-chamber of the Sovereign. But the troubles which agitated the whole country did not reach the quiet Orangery in which Temple loitered away several years without once seeing the smoke of London. He now and then appeared in the circle at Richmond or Windsor. But the only expressions which he is recorded to have used during these

perilous times were, that he would be a good subject, but that he had done with politics.

The Revolution came: he remained strictly neutral during the short struggle; and he then transferred to the new settlement the same languid sort of loyalty which he had felt for his former masters. He paid court to William at Windsor, and William dined with him at Sheen. But, in spite of the most pressing solicitations, Temple refused to become Secretary of State. The refusal evidently proceeded only from his dislike of trouble and danger; and not, as some of his admirers would have us believe, from any scruple of conscience or honour. For he consented that his son should take the office of Secretary at War under the new Sovereign. This unfortunate young man destroyed himself within a week after his appointment, from vexation at finding that his advice had led the King into some improper steps with regard to Ireland. He seems to have inherited his father's extreme sensibility to failure, without that singular prudence which kept his father out of all situations in which any serious failure was to be apprehended. The blow fell heavily on the family. They retired in deep dejection to Moor Park, which they now preferred to Sheen, on account of the greater distance from London. In that spot,[1] then very secluded, Temple passed the remainder of his life. The air agreed with him. The soil was fruitful, and well suited to an experimental farmer and gardener. The grounds were laid out with the angular regularity which Sir William had admired in the flower-beds of Haarlem and the Hague. A beautiful rivulet, flowing from the hills of Surrey, bounded the domain. But a straight canal which,

[1] Mr. Courtenay (vol. ii. p. 160) confounds Moor Park in Surrey, where Temple resided, with the Moor Park in Hertfordshire, which is praised in the Essay on Gardening.

bordered by a terrace, intersected the garden, was probably more admired by the lovers of the picturesque in that age. The house was small, but neat and well furnished; the neighbourhood very thinly peopled. Temple had no visitors, except a few friends who were willing to travel twenty or thirty miles in order to see him, and now and then a foreigner whom curiosity brought to have a look at the author of the Triple Alliance.

Here, in May 1694, died Lady Temple. From the time of her marriage we know little of her, except that her letters were always greatly admired, and that she had the honour to correspond constantly with Queen Mary. Lady Giffard, who, as far as appears, had always been on the best terms with her sister-in-law, still continued to live with Sir William.

But there were other inmates of Moor Park to whom a far higher interest belongs. An eccentric, uncouth, disagreeable young Irishman, who had narrowly escaped plucking at Dublin, attended Sir William as an amanuensis, for board and twenty pounds a year, dined at the second table, wrote bad verses in praise of his employer, and made love to a very pretty, dark-eyed young girl, who waited on Lady Giffard. Little did Temple imagine that the coarse exterior of his dependent concealed a genius equally suited to politics and to letters, a genius destined to shake great kingdoms, to stir the laughter and the rage of millions, and to leave to posterity memorials which can perish only with the English language. Little did he think that the flirtation in his servants' hall, which he perhaps scarcely deigned to make the subject of a jest, was the beginning of a long unprosperous love, which was to be as widely famed as the passion of Petrarch or of Abelard. Sir William's secretary was Jonathan Swift. Lady Giffard's waiting maid was poor Stella.

Swift retained no pleasing recollection of Moor Park. And we may easily suppose a situation like his to have been intolerably painful to a mind haughty, irascible, and conscious of preeminent ability. Long after, when he stood in the Court of Requests with a circle of gartered peers round him, or punned and rhymed with Cabinet Ministers over Secretary St. John's Monte-Pulciano, he remembered, with deep and sore feeling, how miserable he used to be for days together when he suspected that Sir William had taken something ill. He could hardly believe that he, the Swift who chid the Lord Treasurer, rallied the Captain General, and confronted the pride of the Duke of Buckinghamshire with pride still more inflexible, could be the same being who had passed nights of sleepless anxiety, in musing over a cross look or a testy word of a patron. "Faith," he wrote to Stella, with bitter levity, "Sir William spoiled a fine gentleman." Yet, in justice to Temple, we must say that there is no reason to think that Swift was more unhappy at Moor Park than he would have been in a similar situation under any roof in England. We think also that the obligations which the mind of Swift owed to that of Temple were not inconsiderable. Every judicious reader must be struck by the peculiarities which distinguished Swift's political tracts from all similar works produced by mere men of letters. Let any person compare, for example, the Conduct of the Allies, or the Letter to the October Club, with Johnson's False Alarm, or Taxation no Tyranny, and he will be at once struck by the difference of which we speak. He may possibly think Johnson a greater man than Swift. He may possibly prefer Johnson's style to Swift's. But he will at once acknowledge that Johnson writes like a man who has never been out of his study. Swift writes like a man who has passed his whole life in

the midst of public business, and to whom the most important affairs of state are as familiar as his weekly bills.

> "Turn him to any cause of policy,
> The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
> Familiar as his garter."

The difference, in short, between a political pamphlet by Johnson, and a political pamphlet by Swift, is as great as the difference between an account of a battle by Mr. Southey and the account of the same battle by Colonel Napier. It is impossible to doubt that the superiority of Swift is to be, in a great measure, attributed to his long and close connexion with Temple.

Indeed, remote as were the alleys and flowerpots of Moor Park from the haunts of the busy and the ambitious, Swift had ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the hidden causes of many great events. William was in the habit of consulting Temple, and occasionally visited him. Of what passed between them very little is known. It is certain, however, that when the Triennial Bill had been carried through the two Houses, his Majesty, who was exceedingly unwilling to pass it, sent the Earl of Portland to learn Temple's opinion. Whether Temple thought the bill in itself a good one does not appear; but he clearly saw how imprudent it must be in a prince, situated as William was, to engage in an altercation with his Parliament, and directed Swift to draw up a paper on the subject, which, however, did not convince the King.

The chief amusement of Temple's declining years was literature. After his final retreat from business, he wrote his very agreeable Memoirs, corrected and transcribed many of his letters, and published several miscellaneous treatises, the best of which, we think, is

that on Gardening. The style of his essays is, on the whole, excellent, almost always pleasing, and now and then stately and splendid. The matter is generally of much less value; as our readers will readily believe when we inform them that Mr. Courtenay, a biographer, that is to say, a literary vassal, bound by the immemorial law of his tenure to render homage, aids, reliefs, and all other customary services to his lord, avows that he cannot give an opinion about the essay on Heroic Virtue, because he cannot read it without skipping; a circumstance which strikes us as peculiarly strange, when we consider how long Mr. Courtenay was at the India Board, and how many thousand paragraphs of the copious official eloquence of the East he must have perused.

One of Sir William's pieces, however, deserves notice, not, indeed, on account of its intrinsic merit, but on account of the light which it throws on some curious weaknesses of his character, and on account of the extraordinary effects which it produced in the republic of letters. A most idle and contemptible controversy had arisen in France touching the comparative merit of the ancient and modern writers. It was certainly not to be expected that, in that age, the question would be tried according to those large and philosophical principles of criticism which guided the judgments of Lessing and of Herder. But it might have been expected that those who undertook to decide the point would at least take the trouble to read and understand the authors on whose merits they were to pronounce. Now, it is no exaggeration to say that, among the disputants who clamoured, some for the ancients and some for the moderns, very few were decently acquainted with either ancient or modern literature, and hardly one was well acquainted with both. In Racine's amusing preface to the *Iphigénie* the reader may find noticed a most ridiculous mistake

into which one of the champions of the moderns fell about a passage in the Alcestis of Euripides. Another writer is so inconceivably ignorant as to blame Homer for mixing the four Greek dialects, Doric, Ionic, Æolic, and Attic, just, says he, as if a French poet were to put Gascon phrases and Picard phrases into the midst of his pure Parisian writing. On the other hand, it is no exaggeration to say that the defenders of the ancients were entirely unacquainted with the greatest productions of later times; nor, indeed, were the defenders of the moderns better informed. The parallels which were instituted in the course of this dispute are inexpressibly ridiculous. Balzac was selected as the rival of Cicero. Corneille was said to unite the merits of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. We should like to see a Prometheus after Corneille's fashion. The Provincial Letters, masterpieces undoubtedly of reasoning, wit, and eloquence, were pronounced to be superior to all the writings of Plato, Cicero, and Lucian together, particularly in the art of dialogue, an art in which, as it happens, Plato far excelled all men, and in which Pascal, great and admirable in other respects, is notoriously very deficient.

This childish controversy spread to England; and some mischievous demon suggested to Temple the thought of undertaking the defence of the ancients. As to his qualifications for the task, it is sufficient to say, that he knew not a word of Greek. But his vanity which, when he was engaged in the conflicts of active life and surrounded by rivals, had been kept in tolerable order by his discretion, now, when he had long lived in seclusion, and had become accustomed to regard himself as by far the first man of his circle, rendered him blind to his own deficiencies. In an evil hour he published an Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning. The style of this treatise is very good, the matter ludicrous and contemptible to the

last degree. There we read how Lycurgus travelled into India, and brought the Spartan laws from that country; how Orpheus made voyages in search of knowledge, and attained to a depth of learning which has made him renowned in all succeeding ages; how Pythagoras passed twenty-two years in Egypt, and, after graduating there, spent twelve years more at Babylon, where the Magi admitted him *ad eundem*; how the ancient Brahmins lived two hundred years; how the earliest Greek philosophers foretold earthquakes and plagues, and put down riots by magic; and how much Ninus surpassed in abilities any of his successors on the throne of Assyria. The moderns, Sir William owns, have found out the circulation of the blood; but, on the other hand, they have quite lost the art of conjuring; nor can any modern fiddler enchant fishes, fowls, and serpents by his performance. He tells us that "Thales, Pythagoras, Democritus, Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus made greater progresses in the several empires of science than any of their successors have since been able to reach;" which is just as absurd as if he had said that the greatest names in British science are Merlin, Michael Scot, Dr. Sydenham, and Lord Bacon. Indeed, the manner in which Temple mixes the historical and the fabulous reminds us of those classical dictionaries, intended for the use of schools, in which Narcissus the lover of himself and Narcissus the freedman of Claudius, Pollux the son of Jupiter and Leda and Pollux the author of the Onomasticon, are ranged under the same headings, and treated as personages equally real. The effect of this arrangement resembles that which would be produced by a dictionary of modern names, consisting of such articles as the following:—"Jones, William, an eminent Orientalist, and one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Bengal—Davy, a fiend who

destroys ships—Thomas, a foundling, brought up by Mr. Allworthy." It is from such sources as these that Temple seems to have learned all that he knew about the ancients. He puts the story of Orpheus between the Olympic games and the battle of Arbela; as if we had exactly the same reasons for believing that Orpheus led beasts with his lyre, which we have for believing that there were races at Pisa, or that Alexander conquered Darius.

He manages little better when he comes to the moderns. He gives us a catalogue of those whom he regards as the greatest writers of later times. It is sufficient to say that, in his list of Italians, he has omitted Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso; in his list of Spaniards, Lope and Calderon; in his list of French, Pascal, Bossuet, Molière, Corneille, Racine, and Boileau; and in his list of English, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton.

In the midst of all this vast mass of absurdity one paragraph stands out preeminent. The doctrine of Temple, not a very comfortable doctrine, is that the human race is constantly degenerating, and that the oldest books in every kind are the best. In confirmation of this notion, he remarks that the Fables of Æsop are the best Fables, and the Letters of Phalaris the best Letters in the world. On the merit of the Letters of Phalaris he dwells with great warmth and with extraordinary felicity of language. Indeed we could hardly select a more favourable specimen of the graceful and easy majesty to which his style sometimes rises than this unlucky passage. He knows, he says, that some learned men, or men who pass for learned, such as Politian, have doubted the genuineness of these letters: but of such doubts he speaks with the greatest contempt. Now it is perfectly certain, first, that the letters are very bad; secondly, that they are spurious; and thirdly, that,

whether they be bad or good, spurious or genuine, Temple could know nothing of the matter; inasmuch as he was no more able to construe a line of them than to decipher an Egyptian obelisk.

This Essay, silly as it is, was exceedingly well received, both in England and on the Continent. And the reason is evident. The classical scholars who saw its absurdity were generally on the side of the ancients, and were inclined rather to veil than to expose the blunders of an ally; the champions of the moderns were generally as ignorant as Temple himself; and the multitude was charmed by his flowing and melodious diction. He was doomed, however, to smart, as he well deserved, for his vanity and folly.

Christchurch at Oxford was then widely and justly celebrated as a place where the lighter parts of classical learning were cultivated with success. With the deeper mysteries of philology neither the instructors nor the pupils had the smallest acquaintance. They fancied themselves Scaligers, as Bentley scornfully said, if they could write a copy of Latin verses with only two or three small faults. From this College proceeded a new edition of the Letters of Phalaris, which were rare, and had been in request since the appearance of Temple's Essay. The nominal editor was Charles Boyle, a young man of noble family and promising parts; but some older members of the society lent their assistance. While this work was in preparation, an idle quarrel, occasioned, it should seem, by the negligence and misrepresentations of a bookseller, arose between Boyle and the King's Librarian, Richard Bentley. Boyle, in the preface to his edition, inserted a bitter reflection on Bentley. Bentley revenged himself by proving that the Epistles of Phalaris were forgeries, and in his remarks on this subject treated Temple, not indecently, but with no great reverence.

Temple, who was quite unaccustomed to any but the most respectful usage, who, even while engaged in politics, had always shrunk from all rude collision and had generally succeeded in avoiding it, and whose sensitiveness had been increased by many years of seclusion and flattery, was moved to most violent resentment, complained, very unjustly, of Bentley's foul-mouthed raillery, and declared that he had commenced an answer, but had laid it aside, "having no mind to enter the lists with such a mean, dull, unmannerly pedant." Whatever may be thought of the temper which Sir William showed on this occasion, we cannot too highly applaud his discretion in not finishing and publishing his answer, which would certainly have been a most extraordinary performance.

He was not, however, without defenders. Like Hector, when struck down prostrate by Ajax, he was in an instant covered by a thick crowd of shields.

> "Οὔτις ἐδυνήσατο ποιμένα λαῶν
> Οὐτάσαι, οὐδὲ βαλεῖν· πρὶν γὰρ περίβησαν ἄριστοι,
> Πουλυδάμας τε, καὶ Αἰνείας, καὶ δῖος Ἀγήνωρ,
> Σαρπηδών τ' ἀρχὸς Λυκίων, καὶ Γλαῦκος ἀμύμων.

Christchurch was up in arms; and though that College seems then to have been almost destitute of severe and accurate learning, no academical society could show a greater array of orators, wits, politicians, bustling adventurers who united the superficial accomplishments of the scholar with the manners and arts of the man of the world; and this formidable body resolved to try how far smart repartees, well-turned sentences, confidence, puffing and intrigue could, on the question whether a Greek book were or were not genuine, supply the place of a little knowledge of Greek.

Out came the Reply to Bentley, bearing the name of Boyle, but in truth written by Atterbury with the

assistance of Smalridge and others. A most remarkable book it is, and often reminds us of Goldsmith's observation, that the French would be the best cooks in the world if they had any butcher's meat; for that they can make ten dishes out of a nettle-top. It really deserves the praise, whatever that praise may be worth, of being the best book ever written by any man on the wrong side of a question of which he was profoundly ignorant. The learning of the confederacy is that of a schoolboy, and not of an extraordinary schoolboy; but it is used with the skill and address of most able, artful, and experienced men; it is beaten out to the very thinnest leaf, and is disposed in such a way as to seem ten times larger than it is. The dexterity with which the confederates avoid grappling with those parts of the subject with which they know themselves to be incompetent to deal is quite wonderful. Now and then, indeed, they commit disgraceful blunders, for which old Busby, under whom they had studied, would have whipped them all round. But this circumstance only raises our opinion of the talents which made such a fight with such scanty means. Let readers who are not acquainted with the controversy imagine a Frenchman, who has acquired just English enough to read the Spectator with a dictionary, coming forward to defend the genuineness of Ireland's Vortigern against Malone; and they will have some notion of the feat which Atterbury had the audacity to undertake, and which, for a time, it was really thought that he had performed.

The illusion was soon dispelled. Bentley's answer for ever settled the question, and established his claim to the first place amongst classical scholars. Nor do those do him justice who represent the controversy as a battle between wit and learning. For though there is a lamentable deficiency of learning on the

side of Boyle, there is no want of wit on the side of Bentley. Other qualities, too, as valuable as either wit or learning, appear conspicuously in Bentley's book, a rare sagacity, an unrivalled power of combination, a perfect mastery of all the weapons of logic. He was greatly indebted to the furious outcry which the misrepresentations, sarcasms, and intrigues of his opponents had raised against him, an outcry in which fashionable and political circles joined, and which was echoed by thousands who did not know whether Phalaris ruled in Sicily or in Siam. His spirit, daring even to rashness, self-confident even to negligence, and proud, even to insolent ferocity, was awed for the first and for the last time, awed, not into meanness or cowardice, but into wariness and sobriety. For once he ran no risks; he left no crevice unguarded; he wantoned in no paradoxes; above all, he returned no railing for the railing of his enemies. In almost every thing that he has written we can discover proofs of genius and learning. But it is only here that his genius and learning appear to have been constantly under the guidance of good sense and good temper. Here, we find none of that besotted reliance on his own powers and on his own luck, which he showed when he undertook to edite Milton: none of that perverted ingenuity which deforms so many of his notes on Horace; none of that disdainful carelessness by which he laid himself open to the keen and dexterous thrust of Middleton; none of that extravagant vaunting and savage scurrility by which he afterwards dishonoured his studies and his profession, and degraded himself almost to the level of De Pauw.

Temple did not live to witness the utter and irreparable defeat of his champions. He died, indeed, at a fortunate moment, just after the appearance of Boyle's book, and while all England was laughing at

the way in which the Christchurch men had handled the pedant. In Boyle's book, Temple was praised in the highest terms, and compared to Memmius: not a very happy comparison: for almost the only particular information which we have about Memmius is that, in agitated times, he thought it his duty to attend exclusively to politics, and that his friends could not venture, except when the Republic was quiet and prosperous, to intrude on him with their philosophical and poetical productions. It is on this account that Lucretius puts up the exquisitely beautiful prayer for peace with which his poem opens:

"Nam neque nos agere hoc patriaï tempore iniquo
Possumus æquo animo, nec Memmï clara propago
Talibus in rebus communi deesse saluti."

This description is surely by no means applicable to a statesman who had, through the whole course of his life, carefully avoided exposing himself in seasons of trouble; who had repeatedly refused, in most critical conjunctures, to be Secretary of State; and who now, in the midst of revolutions, plots, foreign and domestic wars, was quietly writing nonsense about the visits of Lycurgus to the Brahmins and the tunes which Arion played to the Dolphin.

We must not omit to mention that, while the controversy about Phalaris was raging, Swift, in order to show his zeal and attachment, wrote the Battle of the Books, the earliest piece in which his peculiar talents are discernible. We may observe that the bitter dislike of Bentley, bequeathed by Temple to Swift, seems to have been communicated by Swift to Pope, to Arbuthnot, and to others, who continued to tease the great critic, long after he had shaken hands very cordially both with Boyle and with Atterbury.

Sir William Temple died at Moor Park in

January, 1699. He appears to have suffered no intellectual decay. His heart was buried under a sun-dial which still stands in his favourite garden. His body was laid in Westminster Abbey by the side of his wife; and a place hard by was set apart for Lady Giffard, who long survived him. Swift was his literary executor, superintended the publication of his Letters and Memoirs, and, in the performance of this office, had some acrimonious contests with the family.

Of Temple's character little more remains to be said. Burnet accuses him of holding irreligious opinions, and corrupting every body who came near him. But the vague assertion of so rash and partial a writer as Burnet, about a man with whom, as far as we know, he never exchanged a word, is of little weight. It is, indeed, by no means improbable that Temple may have been a freethinker. The Osbornes thought him so when he was a very young man. And it is certain that a large proportion of the gentlemen of rank and fashion who made their entrance into society while the Puritan party was at the height of power, and while the memory of the reign of that party was still recent, conceived a strong disgust for all religion. The imputation was common between Temple and all the most distinguished courtiers of the age. Rochester and Buckingham were open scoffers, and Mulgrave very little better. Shaftesbury, though more guarded, was supposed to agree with them in opinion. All the three noblemen who were Temple's colleagues during the short time of his sitting in the Cabinet were of very indifferent repute as to orthodoxy. Halifax, indeed, was generally considered as an atheist; but he solemnly denied the charge; and, indeed, the truth seems to be that he was more religiously disposed than most of the statesmen of that age, though

two impulses which were unusually strong in him, a passion for ludicrous images, and a passion for subtle speculations, sometimes prompted him to talk on serious subjects in a manner which gave great and just offence. It is not unlikely that Temple, who seldom went below the surface of any question, may have been infected with the prevailing scepticism. All that we can say on the subject is that there is no trace of impiety in his works, and that the ease with which he carried his election for an university, where the majority of the voters were clergymen, though it proves nothing as to his opinions, must, we think, be considered as proving that he was not, as Burnet seems to insinuate, in the habit of talking atheism to all who came near him.

Temple, however, will scarcely carry with him any great accession of authority to the side either of religion or of infidelity. He was no profound thinker. He was merely a man of lively parts and quick observation, a man of the world among men of letters, a man of letters among men of the world. Mere scholars were dazzled by the Ambassador and Cabinet councillor; mere politicians by the Essayist and Historian. But neither as a writer nor as a statesman can we allot to him any very high place. As a man, he seems to us to have been excessively selfish, but very sober, wary, and far-sighted in his selfishness; to have known better than most people what he really wanted in life; and to have pursued what he wanted with much more than ordinary steadiness and sagacity, never suffering himself to be drawn aside either by bad or by good feelings. It was his constitution to dread failure more than he desired success, to prefer security, comfort, repose, leisure, to the turmoil and anxiety which are inseparable from greatness; and this natural languor of mind, when contrasted with the malignant energy of

the keen and restless spirits among whom his lot was cast, sometimes appears to resemble the moderation of virtue. But we must own that he seems to us to sink into littleness and meanness when we compare him, we do not say with any high ideal standard of morality, but with many of those frail men who, aiming at noble ends, but often drawn from the right path by strong passions and strong temptations, have left to posterity a doubtful and checkered fame.

GLADSTONE ON CHURCH AND STATE.

(APRIL, 1839.)

The State in its Relations with the Church. By W. E. GLADSTONE, Esq., Student of Christ Church, and M.P. for Newark. 8vo. Second Edition. London: 1839.

THE author of this volume is a young man of unblemished character, and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow, reluctantly and mutinously, a leader whose experience and eloquence are indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor. It would not be at all strange if Mr. Gladstone were one of the most unpopular men in England. But we believe that we do him no more than justice when we say that his abilities and his demeanour have obtained for him the respect and good will of all parties. His first appearance in the character of an author is therefore an interesting event; and it is natural that the gentle wishes of the public should go with him to his trial.

We are much pleased, without any reference to the soundness or unsoundness of Mr. Gladstone's theories, to see a grave and elaborate treatise on an important part of the Philosophy of Government proceed from the pen of a young man who is rising to eminence in the House of Commons. There is little danger that people engaged in the conflicts of active life will be too much addicted to general

speculation. The opposite vice is that which most easily besets them. The times and tides of business and debate tarry for no man. A politician must often talk and act before he has thought and read. He may be very ill informed respecting a question; all his notions about it may be vague and inaccurate; but speak he must; and if he is a man of ability, of tact, and of intrepidity, he soon finds that, even under such circumstances, it is possible to speak successfully. He finds that there is a great difference between the effect of written words, which are perused and reperused in the stillness of the closet, and the effect of spoken words which, set off by the graces of utterance and gesture, vibrate for a single moment on the ear. He finds that he may blunder without much chance of being detected, that he may reason sophistically, and escape unrefuted. He finds that, even on knotty questions of trade and legislation, he can, without reading ten pages, or thinking ten minutes, draw forth loud plaudits, and sit down with the credit of having made an excellent speech. Lysias, says Plutarch, wrote a defence for a man who was to be tried before one of the Athenian tribunals. Long before the defendant had learned the speech by heart, he became so much dissatisfied with it that he went in great distress to the author. "I was delighted with your speech the first time I read it; but I liked it less the second time, and still less the third time; and now it seems to me to be no defence at all." "My good friend," said Lysias, "you quite forget that the judges are to hear it only once." The case is the same in the English parliament. It would be as idle in an orator to waste deep meditation and long research on his speeches, as it would be in the manager of a theatre to adorn all the crowd of courtiers and ladies who cross over the stage in a procession with real pearls and dia-

monds. It is not by accuracy or profundity that men become the masters of great assemblies. And why be at the charge of providing logic of the best quality, when a very inferior article will be equally acceptable? Why go as deep into a question as Burke, only in order to be, like Burke, coughed down, or left speaking to green benches and red boxes? This has long appeared to us to be the most serious of the evils which are to be set off against the many blessings of popular government. It is a fine and true saying of Bacon, that reading makes a full man, talking a ready man, and writing an exact man. The tendency of institutions like those of England is to encourage readiness in public men, at the expense both of fulness and of exactness. The keenest and most vigorous minds of every generation, minds often admirably fitted for the investigation of truth, are habitually employed in producing arguments such as no man of sense would ever put into a treatise intended for publication, arguments which are just good enough to be used once, when aided by fluent delivery and pointed language. The habit of discussing questions in this way necessarily reacts on the intellects of our ablest men, particularly of those who are introduced into parliament at a very early age, before their minds have expanded to full maturity. The talent for debate is developed in such men to a degree which, to the multitude, seems as marvellous as the performance of an Italian *improvisatore*. But they are fortunate indeed if they retain unimpaired the faculties which are required for close reasoning or for enlarged speculation. Indeed we should sooner expect a great original work on political science, such a work, for example, as the Wealth of Nations, from an apothecary in a country town, or from a minister in the Hebrides, than from a statesman who, ever since he

was one-and-twenty, had been a distinguished debater in the House of Commons.

We therefore hail with pleasure, though assuredly not with unmixed pleasure, the appearance of this work. That a young politician should, in the intervals afforded by his parliamentary avocations, have constructed and propounded, with much study and mental toil, an original theory on a great problem in politics, is a circumstance which, abstracted from all consideration of the soundness or unsoundness of his opinions, must be considered as highly creditable to him. We certainly cannot wish that Mr. Gladstone's doctrines may become fashionable among public men. But we heartily wish that his laudable desire to penetrate beneath the surface of questions, and to arrive, by long and intent meditation, at the knowledge of great general laws, were much more fashionable than we at all expect it to become.

Mr. Gladstone seems to us to be, in many respects, exceedingly well qualified for philosophical investigation. His mind is of large grasp; nor is he deficient in dialectical skill. But he does not give his intellect fair play. There is no want of light, but a great want of what Bacon would have called dry light. Whatever Mr. Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false medium of passions and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable analogy to his mode of thinking, and indeed exercises great influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic which it should illustrate. Half his acuteness and diligence, with a barren imagination and a scanty vocabulary, would have saved him from almost all his mistakes. He has one gift most dangerous to a speculator, a vast command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and uncertain import; of a kind of language which affects

us much in the same way in which the lofty diction of the Chorus of Clouds affected the simple-hearted Athenian.

ὦ γῆ τοῦ φθέγματος, ὡς ἱερὸν, καὶ σεμνὸν, καὶ τερατῶδες.

When propositions have been established, and nothing remains but to amplify and decorate them, this dim magnificence may be in place. But if it is admitted into a demonstration, it is very much worse than absolute nonsense; just as that transparent haze, through which the sailor sees capes and mountains of false sizes and in false bearings, is more dangerous than utter darkness. Now, Mr. Gladstone is fond of employing the phraseology of which we speak in those parts of his work which require the utmost perspicuity and precision of which human language is capable; and in this way, he deludes first himself, and then his readers. The foundations of his theory, which ought to be buttresses of adamant, are made out of the flimsy materials which are fit only for perorations. This fault is one which no subsequent care or industry can correct. The more strictly Mr. Gladstone reasons on his premises, the more absurd are the conclusions which he brings out; and, when at last his good sense and good nature recoil from the horrible practical inferences to which his theory leads, he is reduced sometimes to take refuge in arguments inconsistent with his fundamental doctrines, and sometimes to escape from the legitimate consequences of his false principles, under cover of equally false history.

It would be unjust not to say that this book, though not a good book, shows more talent than many good books. It abounds with eloquent and ingenious passages. It bears the signs of much patient thought. It is written throughout with excellent

taste and excellent temper; nor does it, so far as we have observed, contain one expression unworthy of a gentleman, a scholar, or a Christian. But the doctrines which are put forth in it appear to us, after full and calm consideration, to be false, to be in the highest degree pernicious, and to be such as, if followed out in practice to their legitimate consequences, would inevitably produce the dissolution of society: and for this opinion we shall proceed to give our reasons with that freedom which the importance of the subject requires, and which Mr. Gladstone, both by precept and by example, invites us to use, but, we hope, without rudeness, and, we are sure, without malevolence.

Before we enter on an examination of this theory, we wish to guard ourselves against one misconception. It is possible that some persons who have read Mr. Gladstone's book carelessly, and others who have merely heard in conversation, or seen in a newspaper, that the member for Newark has written in defence of the Church of England against the supporters of the voluntary system, may imagine that we are writing in defence of the voluntary system, and that we desire the abolition of the Established Church. This is not the case. It would be as unjust to accuse us of attacking the Church, because we attack Mr. Gladstone's doctrines, as it would be to accuse Locke of wishing for anarchy, because he refuted Filmer's partriarchal theory of government, or to accuse Blackstone of recommending the confiscation of ecclesiastical property, because he denied that the right of the rector to tithe was derived from the Levitical law. It is to be observed, that Mr. Gladstone rests his case on entirely new grounds, and does not differ more widely from us than from some of those who have hitherto been considered as the most illustrious champions of the Church. He

is not content with the Ecclesiastical Polity, and rejoices that the latter part of that celebrated work "does not carry with it the weight of Hooker's plenary authority." He is not content with Bishop Warburton's Alliance of Church and State. "The propositions of that work generally," he says, "are to be received with qualification;" and he agrees with Bolingbroke in thinking that Warburton's whole theory rests on a fiction. He is still less satisfied with Paley's defence of the Church, which he pronounces to be "tainted by the original vice of false ethical principles," and "full of the seeds of evil." He conceives that Dr. Chalmers has taken a partial view of the subject, and "put forth much questionable matter." In truth, on almost every point on which we are opposed to Mr. Gladstone, we have on our side the authority of some divine, eminent as a defender of existing establishments.

Mr. Gladstone's whole theory rests on this great fundamental proposition, that the propagation of religious truth is one of the principal ends of government, as government. If Mr. Gladstone has not proved this proposition, his system vanishes at once.

We are desirous, before we enter on the discussion of this important question, to point out clearly a distinction which, though very obvious, seems to be overlooked by many excellent people. In their opinion, to say that the ends of government are temporal and not spiritual is tantamount to saying that the temporal welfare of man is of more importance than his spiritual welfare. But this is an entire mistake. The question is not whether spiritual interests be or be not superior in importance to temporal interests; but whether the machinery which happens at any moment to be employed for the purpose of protecting certain temporal

interests of a society be necessarily such a machinery as is fitted to promote the spiritual interests of that society. Without a division of labour the world could not go on. It is of very much more importance that men should have food than that they should have pianofortes. Yet it by no means follows that every pianoforte-maker ought to add the business of a baker to his own; for, if he did so, we should have both much worse music and much worse bread. It is of much more importance that the knowledge of religious truth should be wisely diffused than that the art of sculpture should flourish among us. Yet it by no means follows that the Royal Academy ought to unite with its present functions those of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, to distribute theological tracts, to send forth missionaries, to turn out Nollekens for being a Catholic, Bacon for being a Methodist, and Flaxman for being a Swedenborgian. For the effect of such folly would be that we should have the worst possible Academy of Arts, and the worst possible Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. The community, it is plain, would be thrown into universal confusion, if it were supposed to be the duty of every association which is formed for one good object to promote every other good object.

As to some of the ends of civil government, all people are agreed. That it is designed to protect our persons and our property, that it is designed to compel us to satisfy our wants, not by rapine, but by industry; that it is designed to compel us to decide our differences, not by the strong hand, but by arbitration; that it is designed to direct our whole force, as that of one man, against any other society which may offer us injury; these are propositions which will hardly be disputed.

Now these are matters in which man, without any

reference to any higher being, or to any future state, is very deeply interested. Every human being, be he idolater, Mahometan, Jew, Papist, Socinian, Deist, or Atheist, naturally loves life, shrinks from pain, desires comforts which can be enjoyed only in communities where property is secure. To be murdered, to be tortured, to be robbed, to be sold into slavery, these are evidently evils from which men of every religion, and men of no religion, wish to be protected; and therefore it will hardly be disputed that men of every religion, and of no religion, have thus far a common interest in being well governed.

But the hopes and fears of man are not limited to this short life and to this visible world. He finds himself surrounded by the signs of a power and wisdom higher than his own; and, in all ages and nations, men of all orders of intellect, from Bacon and Newton, down to the rudest tribes of cannibals, have believed in the existence of some superior mind. Thus far the voice of mankind is almost unanimous. But whether there be one God, or many, what may be God's natural and what His moral attributes, in what relation His creatures stand to Him, whether He have ever disclosed Himself to us by any other revelation than that which is written in all the parts of the glorious and well ordered world which He has made, whether His revelation be contained in any permanent record, how that record should be interpreted, and whether it have pleased Him to appoint any unerring interpreter on earth, these are questions respecting which there exists the widest diversity of opinion, and respecting some of which a large part of our race has, ever since the dawn of regular history, been deplorably in error.

Now here are two great objects: one is the protection of the persons and estates of citizens from injury; the other is the propagation of religious

truth. No two objects more entirely distinct can well be imagined. The former belongs wholly to the visible and tangible world in which we live; the latter belongs to that higher world which is beyond the reach of our senses. The former belongs to this life; the latter to that which is to come. Men who are perfectly agreed as to the importance of the former object, and as to the way of obtaining it, differ as widely as possible respecting the latter object. We must, therefore, pause before we admit that the persons, be they who they may, who are entrusted with power for the promotion of the former object, ought always to use that power for the promotion of the latter object.

Mr. Gladstone conceives that the duties of governments are paternal; a doctrine which we shall not believe till he can show us some government which loves its subjects as a father loves a child, and which is as superior in intelligence to its subjects as a father is to a child. He tells us in lofty though somewhat indistinct language, that "Government occupies in moral the place of τὸ πᾶν in physical science." If government be indeed τὸ πᾶν in moral science, we do not understand why rulers should not assume all the functions which Plato assigned to them. Why should they not take away the child from the mother, select the nurse, regulate the school, overlook the playground, fix the hours of labour and of recreation, prescribe what ballads shall be sung, what tunes shall be played, what books shall be read, what physic shall be swallowed? Why should not they choose our wives, limit our expenses, and stint us to a certain number of dishes of meat, of glasses of wine, and of cups of tea? Plato, whose hardihood in speculation was perhaps more wonderful than any other peculiarity of his extraordinary mind, and who shrank from nothing to which his principles led, went this whole

length. Mr. Gladstone is not so intrepid. He contents himself with laying down this proposition, that, whatever be the body which in any community is employed to protect the persons and property of men, that body ought also, in its corporate capacity, to profess a religion, to employ its power for the propagation of that religion, and to require conformity to that religion, as an indispensable qualification for all civil office. He distinctly declares that he does not in this proposition confine his view to orthodox governments, or even to Christian governments. The circumstance that a religion is false does not, he tells us, diminish the obligation of governors, as such, to uphold it. If they neglect to do so, "we cannot," he says, "but regard the fact as aggravating the case of the holders of such creed." "I do not scruple to affirm," he adds, "that, if a Mahometan conscientiously believes his religion to come from God, and to teach divine truth, he must believe that truth to be beneficial, and beneficial beyond all other things to the soul of man; and he must therefore, and ought to desire its extension, and to use for its extension all proper and legitimate means; and that, if such Mahometan be a prince, he ought to count among those means the application of whatever influence or funds he may lawfully have at his disposal for such purposes."

Surely this is a hard saying. Before we admit that the Emperor Julian, in employing the influence and the funds at his disposal for the extinction of Christianity, was doing no more than his duty, before we admit that the Arian Theodoric would have committed a crime if he had suffered a single believer in the divinity of Christ to hold any civil employment in Italy, before we admit that the Dutch Government is bound to exclude from office all members of the Church of England, the King of Bavaria to exclude from office all Protestants, the Great Turk to exclude

from office all Christians, the King of Ava to exclude from office all who hold the unity of God, we think ourselves entitled to demand very full and accurate demonstration. When the consequences of a doctrine are so startling, we may well require that its foundations shall be very solid.

The following paragraph is a specimen of the arguments by which Mr. Gladstone has, as he conceives, established his great fundamental proposition :—

"We may state the same proposition in a more general form, in which it surely must command universal assent. Wherever there is power in the universe, that power is the property of God, the King of that universe—his property of right, however for a time withholden or abused. Now this property is, as it were, realised, is used according to the will of the owner, when it is used for the purposes he has ordained, and in the temper of mercy, justice, truth, and faith which he has taught us. But those principles never can be truly, never can be permanently, entertained in the human breast, except by a continual reference to their source, and the supply of the Divine grace. The powers, therefore, that dwell in individuals acting as a government, as well as those that dwell in individuals acting for themselves, can only be secured for right uses by applying to them a religion."

Here are propositions of vast and indefinite extent, conveyed in language which has a certain obscure dignity and sanctity, attractive, we doubt not, to many minds. But the moment that we examine these propositions closely, the moment that we bring them to the test by running over but a very few of the particulars which are included in them, we find them to be false and extravagant. The doctrine which "must surely command universal assent" is this, that every association of human beings which exercises any power whatever, that is to say, every association of human beings, is bound, as such association, to profess a religion. Imagine the effect which

would follow if this principle were really in force during four-and-twenty hours. Take one instance out of a million. A stage-coach company has power over its horses. This power is the property of God. It is used according to the will of God when it is used with mercy. But the principle of mercy can never be truly or permanently entertained in the human breast without continual reference to God. The powers, therefore, that dwell in individuals, acting as a stage-coach company, can only be secured for right uses by applying to them a religion. Every stage-coach company ought, therefore, in its collective capacity, to profess some one faith, to have its articles, and its public worship, and its tests. That this conclusion, and an infinite number of other conclusions equally strange, follow of necessity from Mr. Gladstone's principle, is as certain as it is that two and two make four. And, if the legitimate conclusions be so absurd, there must be something unsound in the principle.

We will quote another passage of the same sort:—

"Why, then, we now come to ask, should the governing body in a state profess a religion? First, because it is composed of individual *men*; and they, being appointed to act in a definite moral capacity, must sanctify their acts done in that capacity by the offices of religion; inasmuch as the acts cannot otherwise be acceptable to God, or any thing but sinful and punishable in themselves. And whenever we turn our face away from God in our conduct, we are living atheistically. . . . . In fulfilment, then, of his obligations as an individual, the statesman must be a worshipping man. But his acts are public—the powers and instruments with which he works are public—acting under and by the authority of the law, he moves at his word ten thousand subject arms; and because such energies are thus essentially public, and wholly out of the range of mere individual agency, they must be sanctified not only by the private personal prayers and piety of those who fill public situations, but also by public acts of the men composing the public body. They

must offer prayer and praise in their public and collective character—in that character wherein they constitute the organ of the nation, and wield its collective force. Wherever there is a reasoning agency, there is a moral duty and responsibility involved in it. The governors are reasoning agents for the nation, in their conjoint acts as such. And therefore there must be attached to this agency, as that without which none of our responsibilities can be met, a religion. And this religion must be that of the conscience of the governor, or none."

Here again we find propositions of vast sweep, and of sound so orthodox and solemn that many good people, we doubt not, have been greatly edified by it. But let us examine the words closely; and it will immediately become plain that, if these principles be once admitted, there is an end of all society. No combination can be formed for any purpose of mutual help, for trade, for public works, for the relief of the sick or the poor, for the promotion of art or science, unless the members of the combination agree in their theological opinions. Take any such combination at random, the London and Birmingham Railway Company, for example, and observe to what consequences Mr. Gladstone's arguments inevitably lead. "Why should the Directors of the Railway Company, in their collective capacity, profess a religion? First, because the direction is composed of individual men appointed to act in a definite moral capacity, bound to look carefully to the property, the limbs, and the lives of their fellow-creatures, bound to act diligently for their constituents, bound to govern their servants with humanity and justice, bound to fulfil with fidelity many important contracts. They must, therefore, sanctify their acts by the offices of religion, or these acts will be sinful and punishable in themselves. 'In fulfilment, then, of his obligations as an individual, the Director of the London and Birmingham Railway

Company must be a worshipping man. But his acts are public. He acts for a body. He moves at his word ten thousand subject arms. And because these energies are out of the range of his mere individual agency, they must be sanctified by public acts of devotion. The Railway Directors must offer prayer and praise in their public and collective character, in that character wherewith they constitute the organ of the Company, and wield its collected power. Wherever there is reasoning agency, there is moral responsibility. The Directors are reasoning agents for the Company. And therefore there must be attached to this agency, as that without which none of our responsibilities can be met, a religion. And this religion must be that of the conscience of the Director himself, or none. There must be public worship and a test. No Jew, no Socinian, no Presbyterian, no Catholic, no Quaker, must be permitted to be the organ of the Company, and to wield its collected force." Would Mr. Gladstone really defend this proposition? We are sure that he would not; but we are sure that to this proposition, and to innumerable similar propositions, his reasoning inevitably leads.

Again,—

"National will and agency are indisputably one, binding either a dissentient minority or the subject body, in a manner that nothing but the recognition of the doctrine of national personality can justify. National honour and good faith are words in every one's mouth. How do they less imply a personality in nations than the duty towards God, for which we now contend? They are strictly and essentially distinct from the honour and good faith of the individuals composing the nation. France is a person to us, and we to her. A wilful injury done to her is a moral act, and a moral act quite distinct from the acts of all the individuals composing the nation. Upon broad facts like these we may rest, without resorting to the more technical proof which the laws afford in their manner of dealing with corporations. If,

then, a nation have unity of will, have pervading sympathies, have capability of reward and suffering contingent upon its acts, shall we deny its responsibility; its need of a religion to meet that responsibility? . . . . A nation, then, having a personality, lies under the obligation, like the individuals composing its governing body, of sanctifying the acts of that personality by the offices of religion, and thus we have a new and imperative ground for the existence of a state religion."

A new ground we have here, certainly, but whether very imperative may be doubted. Is it not perfectly clear, that this argument applies with exactly as much force to every combination of human beings for a common purpose, as to governments? Is there any such combination in the world, whether technically a corporation or not, which has not this collective personality from which Mr. Gladstone deduces such extraordinary consequences? Look at banks, insurance offices, dock companies, canal companies, gas companies, hospitals, dispensaries, associations for the relief of the poor, associations for apprehending malefactors, associations of medical pupils for procuring subjects, associations of country gentlemen for keeping fox-hounds, book societies, benefit societies, clubs of all ranks, from those which have lined Pall-Mall and St. James's Street with their palaces, down to the Free-and-easy which meets in the shabby parlour of a village inn. Is there a single one of these combinations to which Mr. Gladstone's argument will not apply as well as to the State? In all these combinations, in the Bank of England, for example, or in the Athenæum club, the will and agency of the society are one, and bind the dissentient minority. The Bank and the Athenæum have a good faith and a justice different from the good faith and justice of the individual members. The Bank is a person to those who deposit bullion

with it. The Athenæum is a person to the butcher and the wine-merchant. If the Athenæum keeps money at the Bank, the two societies are as much persons to each other as England and France. Either society may pay its debts honestly; either may try to defraud its creditors; either may increase in prosperity; either may fall into difficulties. If, then, they have this unity of will; if they are capable of doing and suffering good and evil, can we, to use Mr. Gladstone's words, "deny their responsibility, or their need of a religion to meet that responsibility?" Joint-stock banks, therefore, and clubs, "having a personality, lie under the necessity of sanctifying that personality by the offices of religion;" and thus we have "a new and imperative ground" for requiring all the directors and clerks of joint-stock banks, and all the members of clubs, to qualify by taking the sacrament.

The truth is that Mr. Gladstone has fallen into an error very common among men of less talents than his own. It is not unusual for a person who is eager to prove a particular proposition to assume a *major* of huge extent, which includes that particular proposition, without ever reflecting that it includes a great deal more. The fatal facility with which Mr. Gladstone multiplies expressions stately and sonorous, but of indeterminate meaning, eminently qualifies him to practise this sleight on himself and on his readers. He lays down broad general doctrines about power, when the only power of which he is thinking is the power of governments, and about conjoint action, when the only conjoint action of which he is thinking is the conjoint action of citizens in a state. He first resolves on his conclusion. He then makes a *major* of most comprehensive dimensions, and, having satisfied himself that it contains his conclusion, never troubles himself about what

else it may contain: and as soon as we examine it we find that it contains an infinite number of conclusions, every one of which is a monstrous absurdity.

It is perfectly true that it would be a very good thing if all the members of all the associations in the world were men of sound religious views. We have no doubt that a good Christian will be under the guidance of Christian principles, in his conduct as director of a canal company or steward of a charity dinner. If he were, to recur to a case which we before put, a member of a stage-coach company, he would, in that capacity, remember that "a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." But it does not follow that every association of men must, therefore, as such association, profess a religion. It is evident that many great and useful objects can be attained in this world only by co-operation. It is equally evident that there cannot be efficient co-operation, if men proceed on the principle that they must not co-operate for one object unless they agree about other objects. Nothing seems to us more beautiful or admirable in our social system than the facility with which thousands of people, who perhaps agree only on a single point, can combine their energies for the purpose of carrying that single point. We see daily instances of this. Two men, one of them obstinately prejudiced against missions, the other president of a missionary society, sit together at the board of a hospital, and heartily concur in measures for the health and comfort of the patients. Two men, one of whom is a zealous supporter and the other a zealous opponent of the system pursued in Lancaster's schools, meet at the Mendicity Society, and act together with the utmost cordiality. The general rule we take to be undoubtedly this, that it is lawful and expedient for men to unite in an association for the promotion

of a good object, though they may differ with respect to other objects of still higher importance.

It will hardly be denied that the security of the persons and property of men is a good object, and that the best way, indeed the only way, of promoting that object, is to combine men together in certain great corporations which are called States. These corporations are very variously, and, for the most part, very imperfectly organized. Many of them abound with frightful abuses. But it seems reasonable to believe that the worst that ever existed was, on the whole, preferable to complete anarchy.

Now, reasoning from analogy, we should say that these great corporations would, like all other associations, be likely to attain their end most perfectly if that end were kept singly in view; and that to refuse the services of those who are admirably qualified to promote that end, because they are not also qualified to promote some other end, however excellent, seems at first sight as unreasonable as it would be to provide that nobody who was not a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries should be a governor of the Eye Infirmary; or that nobody who was not a member of the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews should be a trustee of the Literary Fund.

It is impossible to name any collection of human beings to which Mr. Gladstone's reasonings would apply more strongly than to an army. Where shall we find more complete unity of action than in an army? Where else do so many human beings implicitly obey one ruling mind? What other mass is there which moves so much like one man? Where is such tremendous power entrusted to those who command? Where is so awful a responsibility laid upon them? If Mr. Gladstone has made out, as he conceives, an imperative necessity for a State Religion, much more has he made it out to be imperatively

necessary that every army should, in its collective capacity, profess a religion. Is he prepared to adopt this consequence?

On the morning of the thirteenth of August, in the year 1704, two great captains, equal in authority, united by close private and public ties, but of different creeds, prepared for a battle, on the event of which were staked the liberties of Europe. Marlborough had passed a part of the night in prayer, and before daybreak received the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. He then hastened to join Eugene, who had probably just confessed himself to a Popish priest. The generals consulted together, formed their plan in concert, and repaired each to his own post. Marlborough gave orders for public prayers. The English chaplains read the service at the head of the English regiments. The Calvinistic chaplains of the Dutch army, with heads on which hand of Bishop had never been laid, poured forth their supplications in front of their countrymen. In the meantime, the Danes might listen to their Lutheran ministers; and Capuchins might encourage the Austrian squadrons, and pray to the Virgin for a blessing on the arms of the Holy Roman Empire. The battle commences. These men of various religions all act like members of one body. The Catholic and the Protestant general exert themselves to assist and to surpass each other. Before sunset the Empire is saved: France has lost in a day the fruits of eighty years of intrigue and of victory; and the allies, after conquering together, return thanks to God separately, each after his own form of worship. Now is this practical atheism? Would any man in his senses say, that, because the allied army had unity of action and a common interest, and because a heavy responsibility lay on its Chiefs, it was therefore imperatively necessary that the Army should, as an

Army, have one established religion, that Eugene should be deprived of his command for being a Catholic, that all the Dutch and Austrian colonels should be broken for not subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles? Certainly not. The most ignorant grenadier on the field of battle would have seen the absurdity of such a proposition. "I know," he would have said, "that the Prince of Savoy goes to mass, and that our Corporal John cannot abide it; but what has the mass to do with the taking of the village of Blenheim? The Prince wants to beat the French, and so does Corporal John. If we stand by each other we shall most likely beat them. If we send all the Papists and Dutch away, Tallard will have every man of us." Mr. Gladstone himself, we imagine, would admit that our honest grenadier would have the best of the argument; and if so, what follows? Even this; that all Mr. Gladstone's general principles about power, and responsibility, and personality, and conjoint action, must be given up, and that, if his theory is to stand at all, it must stand on some other foundation.

We have now, we conceive, shown that it may be proper to form men into combinations for important purposes, which combinations shall have unity and common interests, and shall be under the direction of rulers entrusted with great power and lying under solemn responsibility, and yet that it may be highly improper that these combinations should, as such, profess any one system of religious belief, or perform any joint act of religious worship. How, then, is it proved that this may not be the case with some of those great combinations which we call States? We firmly believe that it is the case with some states. We firmly believe that there are communities in which it would be as absurd to mix up theology with government, as it would have been in the right wing

of the allied army at Blenheim to commence a controversy with the left wing, in the middle of the battle, about purgatory and the worship of images.

It is the duty, Mr. Gladstone tells us, of the persons, be they who they may, who hold supreme power in the state, to employ that power in order to promote whatever they may deem to be theological truth. Now, surely, before he can call on us to admit this proposition, he is bound to prove that these persons are likely to do more good than harm by so employing their power. The first question is, whether a government, proposing to itself the propagation of religious truth as one of its principal ends, is more likely to lead the people right than to lead them wrong? Mr. Gladstone evades this question; and perhaps it was his wisest course to do so.

"If," says he, "the government be good, let it have its natural duties and powers at its command; but, if not good, let it be made so. . . . We follow, therefore, the true course in looking first for the true ἰδέα, or abstract conception of a government, of course with allowance for the evil and frailty that are in man, and then in examining whether there be comprised in that ἰδέα a capacity and consequent duty on the part of a government to lay down any laws, or devote any means for the purposes of religion,—in short, to exercise a choice upon religion."

Of course Mr. Gladstone has a perfect right to argue any abstract question, provided that he will constantly bear in mind that it is only an abstract question that he is arguing. Whether a perfect government would or would not be a good machinery for the propagation of religious truth is certainly a harmless, and may, for aught we know, be an edifying subject of inquiry. But it is very important that we should remember that there is not, and never has been, any such government in the world. There is no harm at all in inquiring what course a stone thrown

into the air would take, if the law of gravitation did not operate. But the consequences would be unpleasant, if the inquirer, as soon as he had finished his calculation, were to begin to throw stones about in all directions, without considering that his conclusion rests on a false hypothesis, and that his projectiles, instead of flying away through infinite space, will speedily return in parabolas, and break the windows and heads of his neighbours.

It is very easy to say that governments are good, or if not good, ought to be made so. But what is meant by good government? And how are all the bad governments in the world to be made good? And of what value is a theory which is true only on a supposition in the highest degree extravagant?

We do not, however, admit that, if a government were, for all its temporal ends, as perfect as human frailty allows, such a government would, therefore, be necessarily qualified to propagate true religion. For we see that the fitness of governments to propagate true religion is by no means proportioned to their fitness for the temporal end of their institution. Looking at individuals, we see that the princes under whose rule nations have been most ably protected from foreign and domestic disturbance, and have made the most rapid advances in civilisation, have been by no means good teachers of divinity. Take, for example, the best French sovereign, Henry the Fourth, a king who restored order, terminated a terrible civil war, brought the finances into an excellent condition, made his country respected throughout Europe, and endeared himself to the great body of the people whom he ruled. Yet this man was twice a Huguenot, and twice a Papist. He was, as Davila hints, strongly suspected of having no religion at all in theory, and was certainly not much under religious restraints in his practice. Take the Czar Peter, the

Empress Catherine, Frederick the Great. It will surely not be disputed that these sovereigns, with all their faults, were, if we consider them with reference merely to the temporal ends of government, above the average of merit. Considered as theological guides, Mr. Gladstone would probably put them below the most abject drivellers of the Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon. Again, when we pass from individuals to systems, we by no means find that the aptitude of governments for propagating religious truth is proportioned to their aptitude for secular functions. Without being blind admirers either of the French or of the American institutions, we think it clear that the persons and property of citizens are better protected in France and in New England than in almost any society that now exists, or that has ever existed; very much better, certainly, than in the Roman empire under the orthodox rule of Constantine and Theodosius. But neither the government of France, nor that of New England, is so organized as to be fit for the propagation of theological doctrines. Nor do we think it improbable that the most serious religious errors might prevail in a state which, considered merely with reference to temporal objects, might approach far nearer than any that has ever been known to the idea of what a state should be.

But we shall leave this abstract question, and look at the world as we find it. Does, then, the way in which governments generally obtain their power make it at all probable that they will be more favourable to orthodoxy than to heterodoxy? A nation of barbarians pours down on a rich and unwarlike empire, enslaves the people, portions out the land, and blends the institutions which it finds in the cities with those which it has brought from the woods. A handful of daring adventurers from a civilised nation wander to some savage country, and reduce the aboriginal race

to bondage. A successful general turns his arms against the state which he serves. A society, made brutal by oppression, rises madly on its masters, sweeps away all old laws and usages, and, when its first paroxysm of rage is over, sinks down passively under any form of polity which may spring out of the chaos. A chief of a party, as at Florence, becomes imperceptibly a sovereign, and the founder of a dynasty. A captain of mercenaries, as at Milan, seizes on a city, and by the sword makes himself its ruler. An elective senate, as at Venice, usurps permanent and hereditary power. It is in events such as these that governments have generally originated; and we can see nothing in such events to warrant us in believing that the governments thus called into existence will be peculiarly well fitted to distinguish between religious truth and heresy.

When, again, we look at the constitutions of governments which have become settled, we find no great security for the orthodoxy of rulers. One magistrate holds power because his name was drawn out of a purse; another, because his father held it before him. There are representative systems of all sorts, large constituent bodies, small constituent bodies, universal suffrage, high pecuniary qualifications. We see that, for the temporal ends of governments, some of these constitutions are very skilfully constructed, and that the very worst of them is preferable to anarchy. We see some sort of connexion between the very worst of them and the temporal well-being of society. But it passes our understanding to comprehend what connexion any one of them has with theological truth.

And how stands the fact? Have not almost all the governments in the world always been in the wrong on religious subjects? Mr. Gladstone, we imagine, would say that, except in the time of Constantine, of Jovian, and of a very few of their successors,

and occasionally in England since the Reformation, no government has ever been sincerely friendly to the pure and apostolical Church of Christ. If, therefore, it be true that every ruler is bound in conscience to use his power for the propagation of his own religion, it will follow that, for one ruler who has been bound in conscience to use his power for the propagation of truth, a thousand have been bound in conscience to use their power for the propagation of falsehood. Surely this is a conclusion from which common sense recoils. Surely if experience shows that a certain machine, when used to produce a certain effect, does not produce that effect once in a thousand times, but produces, in the vast majority of cases, an effect directly contrary, we cannot be wrong in saying it is not a machine of which the principal end is to be so used.

If, indeed, the magistrate would content himself with laying his opinions and reasons before the people, and would leave the people, uncorrupted by hope or fear, to judge for themselves, we should see little reason to apprehend that his interference in favour of error would be seriously prejudical to the interests of truth. Nor do we, as will hereafter be seen, object to his taking this course, when it is compatible with the efficient discharge of his more especial duties. But this will not satisfy Mr. Gladstone. He would have the magistrate resort to means which have a great tendency to make malcontents, to make hypocrites, to make careless nominal conformists, but no tendency whatever to produce honest and rational conviction. It seems to us clear that an inquirer who has no wish except to know the truth is more likely to arrive at the truth than an inquirer who knows that if he decides one way he shall be rewarded, and that if he decides the other way he shall be punished. Now, Mr. Gladstone would have governments propagate their opinions by excluding all dissenters from

all civil offices. That is to say, he would have governments propagate their opinions by a process which has no reference whatever to the truth or falsehood of those opinions, by arbitrarily uniting certain worldly advantages with one set of doctrines, and certain worldly inconveniences with another set. It is of the very nature of argument to serve the interests of truth; but if rewards and punishments serve the interest of truth, it is by mere accident. It is very much easier to find arguments for the divine authority of the Gospel than for the divine authority of the Koran. But it is just as easy to bribe or rack a Jew into Mahometanism as into Christianity.

From racks, indeed, and from all penalties directed against the persons, the property, and the liberty of heretics, the humane spirit of Mr. Gladstone shrinks with horror. He only maintains that conformity to the religion of the state ought to be an indispensable qualification for office; and he would, unless we have greatly misunderstood him, think it his duty, if he had the power, to revive the Test Act, to enforce it rigorously, and to extend it to important classes who were formerly exempt from its operation.

This is indeed a legitimate consequence of his principles. But why stop here? Why not roast dissenters at slow fires? All the general reasonings on which this theory rests evidently lead to sanguinary persecution. If the propagation of religious truth be a principal end of government, as government; if it be the duty of a government to employ for that end its constitutional power; if the constitutional power of governments extends, as it most unquestionably does, to the making of laws for the burning of heretics; if burning be, as it most assuredly is, in many cases, a most effectual mode of suppressing opinions; why should we not burn? If the relation in which government ought to stand to

the people be, as Mr. Gladstone tells us, a paternal relation, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that persecution is justifiable. For the right of propagating opinions by punishment is one which belongs to parents as clearly as the right to give instruction. A boy is compelled to attend family worship: he is forbidden to read irreligious books: if he will not learn his catechism, he is sent to bed without his supper: if he plays truant at church-time a task is set him. If he should display the precocity of his talents by expressing impious opinions before his brothers and sisters, we should not much blame his father for cutting short the controversy with a horsewhip. All the reasons which lead us to think that parents are peculiarly fitted to conduct the education of their children, and that education is a principal end of the parental relation, lead us also to think that parents ought to be allowed to use punishment, if necessary, for the purpose of forcing children, who are incapable of judging for themselves, to receive religious instruction and to attend religious worship. Why, then, is this prerogative of punishment, so eminently paternal, to be withheld from a paternal government? It seems to us, also, to be the height of absurdity to employ civil disabilities for the propagation of an opinion, and then to shrink from employing other punishments for the same purpose. For nothing can be clearer than that, if you punish at all, you ought to punish enough. The pain caused by punishment is pure unmixed evil, and never ought to be inflicted, except for the sake of some good. It is mere foolish cruelty to provide penalties which torment the criminal without preventing the crime. Now it is possible, by sanguinary persecution unrelentingly inflicted, to suppress opinions. In this way the Albigenses were put down. In this way the Lollards were put down. In this way the fair promise

of the Reformation was blighted in Italy and Spain. But we may safely defy Mr. Gladstone to point out a single instance in which the system which he recommends has succeeded.

And why should he be so tender-hearted? What reason can he give for hanging a murderer, and suffering a heresiarch to escape without even a pecuniary mulct? Is the heresiarch a less pernicious member of society than the murderer? Is not the loss of one soul a greater evil than the extinction of many lives? And the number of murders committed by the most profligate bravo that ever let out his poniard to hire in Italy, or by the most savage buccaneer that ever prowled on the Windward Station, is small indeed, when compared with the number of souls which have been caught in the snares of one dexterous heresiarch. If, then, the heresiarch causes infinitely greater evils than the murderer, why is he not as proper an object of penal legislation as the murderer? We can give a reason, a reason short, simple, decisive, and consistent. We do not extenuate the evil which the heresiarch produces; but we say that it is not evil of that sort against which it is the end of government to guard. But how Mr. Gladstone, who considers the evil which the heresiarch produces as evil of the sort against which it is the end of government to guard, can escape from the obvious consequence of his doctrine, we do not understand. The world is full of parallel cases. An orange-woman stops up the pavement with her wheelbarrow and a policeman takes her into custody. A miser who has amassed a million suffers an old friend and benefactor to die in a workhouse, and cannot be questioned before any tribunal for his baseness and ingratitude. Is this because legislators think the orange-woman's conduct worse than the miser's? Not at all. It is because the stopping up of the pathway is one of the evils against

which it is the business of the public authorities to protect society, and heartlessness is not one of those evils. It would be the height of folly to say that the miser ought, indeed, to be punished, but that he ought to be punished less severely than the orange-woman.

The heretical Constantius persecutes Athanasius; and why not? Shall Cæsar punish the robber who has taken one purse, and spare the wretch who has taught millions to rob the Creator of His honour, and to bestow it on the creature? The orthodox Theodosius persecutes the Arians, and with equal reason. Shall an insult offered to the Cæsarean majesty be expiated by death; and shall there be no penalty for him who degrades to the rank of a creature the almighty, the infinite Creator? We have a short answer for both: "To Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's. Cæsar is appointed for the punishment of robbers and rebels. He is not appointed for the purpose of either propagating or exterminating the doctrine of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son." "Not so," says Mr. Gladstone. "Cæsar is bound in conscience to propagate whatever he thinks to be the truth as to this question. Constantius is bound to establish the Arian worship throughout the empire, and to displace the bravest captains of his legions, and the ablest ministers of his treasury, if they hold the Nicene faith. Theodosius is equally bound to turn out every public servant whom his Arian predecessors have put in. But if Constantius lays on Athanasius a fine of a single *aureus*, if Theodosius imprisons an Arian presbyter for a week, this is most unjustifiable oppression." Our readers will be curious to know how this distinction is made out.

The reasons which Mr. Gladstone gives against persecution affecting life, limb, and property, may be divided into two classes; first, reasons which can be called reasons only by extreme courtesy, and which

nothing but the most deplorable necessity would ever have induced a man of his abilities to use; and, secondly, reasons which are really reasons, and which have so much force that they not only completely prove his exception, but completely upset his general rule. His artillery on this occasion is composed of two sorts of pieces, pieces which will not go off at all, and pieces which go off with a vengeance, and recoil with most crushing effect upon himself.

"We, as fallible creatures," says Mr. Gladstone, "have no right, from any bare speculations of our own, to administer pains and penalties to our fellow-creatures, whether on social or religious grounds. We have the right to enforce the laws of the land by such pains and penalties, because it is expressly given by him who has declared that the civil rulers are to bear the sword for the punishment of evildoers, and for the encouragement of them that do well. And so, in things spiritual, had it pleased God to give to the Church or the State this power, to be permanently exercised over their members, or mankind at large, we should have the right to use it; but it does not appear to have been so received, and consequently, it should not be exercised."

We should be sorry to think that the security of our lives and property from persecution rested on no better ground than this. Is not a teacher of heresy an evil-doer? Has not heresy been condemned in many countries, and in our own among them, by the laws of the land, which, as Mr. Gladstone says, it is justifiable to enforce by penal sanctions? If a heretic is not specially mentioned in the text to which Mr. Gladstone refers, neither is an assassin, a kidnapper, or a highwayman: and if the silence of the New Testament as to all interference of governments to stop the progress of heresy be a reason for not fining or imprisoning heretics, it is surely just as good a reason for not excluding them from office.

"God," says Mr. Gladstone, "has seen fit to authorize

the employment of force in the one case and not in the other; for it was with regard to chastisement inflicted by the sword for an insult offered to himself that the Redeemer declared his kingdom not to be of this world;—meaning, apparently in an especial manner, that it should be otherwise than after this world's fashion, in respect to the sanctions by which its laws should be maintained."

Now here Mr. Gladstone, quoting from memory, has fallen into an error. The very remarkable words which he cites do not appear to have had any reference to the wound inflicted by Peter on Malchus. They were addressed to Pilate, in answer to the question, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" We cannot help saying that we are surprised that Mr. Gladstone should not have more accurately verified a quotation on which, according to him, principally depends the right of a hundred millions of his fellow-subjects, idolaters, Mussulmans, Catholics, and dissenters, to their property, their liberty, and their lives.

Mr. Gladstone's humane interpretations of Scripture are lamentably destitute of one recommendation, which he considers as of the highest value; they are by no means in accordance with the general precepts or practice of the Church, from the time when the Christians became strong enough to persecute down to a very recent period. A dogma favourable to toleration is certainly not a dogma *quod semper, quod ubique quod ab omnibus.* Bossuet was able to say, we fear with too much truth, that on one point all Christians had long been unanimous, the right of the civil magistrate to propagate truth by the sword; that even heretics had been orthodox as to this right, and that the Anabaptists and Socinians were the first who called it in question. We will not pretend to say what is the best explanation of the text under consideration; but we are sure that Mr. Gladstone's is the worst. According to him, government ought

to exclude dissenters from office, but not to fine them, because Christ's kingdom is not of this world. We do not see why the line may not be drawn at a hundred other places as well as that which he has chosen. We do not see why Lord Clarendon, in recommending the Act of 1664 against conventicles, might not have said, "It hath been thought by some that this *classis* of men might with advantage be not only imprisoned, but pilloried. But methinks, my Lords, we are inhibited from the punishment of the pillory by that Scripture, 'My kingdom is not of this world.'" Archbishop Laud, when he sate on Burton in the Star-Chamber, might have said, "I pronounce for the pillory; and, indeed, I could wish that all such wretches were delivered to the fire, but that our Lord hath said that his kingdom is not of this world." And Gardiner might have written to the Sheriff of Oxfordshire; "See that execution be done without fail on Master Ridley and Master Latimer, as you will answer the same to the Queen's grace at your peril. But if they shall desire to have some gunpowder for the shortening of their torment, I see not but you may grant it, as it is written, *Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo;* that is to say, My kingdom is not of this world."

But Mr. Gladstone has other arguments against persecution, arguments which are of so much weight, that they are decisive not only against persecution, but against his whole theory. "The government," he says, "is incompetent to exercise minute and constant supervision over religious opinion." And hence he infers, that "a government exceeds its province when it comes to adapt a scale of punishments to variations in religious opinion, according to their respective degrees of variation from the established creed. To decline affording countenance to sects is a single and simple rule. To punish their professors,

according to their several errors, even were there no other objection, is one for which the state must assume functions wholly ecclesiastical, and for which it is not intrinsically fitted."

This is, in our opinion, quite true. But how does it agree with Mr. Gladstone's theory? What! the government incompetent to exercise even such a degree of supervision over religious opinion as is implied by the punishment of the most deadly heresy! The government incompetent to measure even the grossest deviations from the standard of truth! The government not intrinsically qualified to judge of the comparative enormity of any theological errors! The government so ignorant on these subjects that it is compelled to leave not merely subtle heresies, discernible only by the eye of a Cyril or a Bucer, but Socinianism, Deism, Mahometanism, Idolatry, Atheism, unpunished! To whom does Mr. Gladstone assign the office of selecting a religion for the state, from among hundreds of religions, every one of which lays claim to truth? Even to this same government, which is now pronounced to be so unfit for theological investigations that it cannot venture to punish a man for worshipping a lump of stone with a score of heads and hands. We do not remember ever to have fallen in with a more extraordinary instance of inconsistency. When Mr. Gladstone wishes to prove that the government ought to establish and endow a religion, and to fence it with a Test Act, government is τὸ πᾶν in the moral world. Those who would confine it to secular ends take a low view of its nature. A religion must be attached to its agency; and this religion must be that of the conscience of the governor, or none. It is for the Governor to decide between Papists and Protestants, Jansenists and Molinists, Arminians and Calvinists, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Sabellians and Tritheists,

Homoousians and Homoiousians, Nestorians and Eutychians, Monothelites and Monophysites, Pædobaptists and Anabaptists. It is for him to rejudge the Acts of Nice and Rimini, of Ephesus and Chalcedon, of Constantinople and St. John Lateran, of Trent and Dort. It is for him to arbitrate between the Greek and the Latin procession, and to determine whether that mysterious *filioque* shall or shall not have a place in the national creed. When he has made up his mind, he is to tax the whole community in order to pay people to teach his opinion, whatever it may be. He is to rely on his own judgment, though it may be opposed to that of nine tenths of the society. He is to act on his own judgment, at the risk of exciting the most formidable discontents. He is to inflict, perhaps on a great majority of the population, what, whether we choose to call it persecution or not, will always be felt as persecution by those who suffer it. He is, on account of differences often too slight for vulgar comprehension, to deprive the state of the services of the ablest men. He is to debase and enfeeble the community which he governs, from a nation into a sect. In our own country, for example, millions of Catholics, millions of Protestant Dissenters, are to be excluded from all power and honours. A great hostile fleet is on the sea: but Nelson is not to command in the Channel if in the mystery of the Trinity he confounds the persons. An invading army has landed in Kent; but the Duke of Wellington is not to be at the head of our forces if he divides the substance. And, after all this, Mr. Gladstone tells us, that it would be wrong to imprison a Jew, a Mussulman, or a Budhist, for a day; because really a government cannot understand these matters, and ought not to meddle with questions which belong to the Church. A singular theologian, indeed, this government! So learned that it

is competent to exclude Grotius from office for being a Semi-Pelagian, so unlearned that it is incompetent to fine a Hindoo peasant a rupee for going on a pilgrimage to Juggernaut.

"To solicit and persuade one another," says Mr. Gladstone, "are privileges which belong to us all; and the wiser and better man is bound to advise the less wise and good: but he is not only not bound, he is not allowed, speaking generally, to coerce him. It is untrue, then, that the same considerations which bind a government to submit a religion to the free choice of the people would therefore justify their enforcing its adoption."

Granted. But it is true that all the same considerations which would justify a government in propagating a religion by means of civil disabilities would justify the propagating of that religion by penal laws. To solicit! Is it solicitation to tell a Catholic Duke, that he must abjure his religion or walk out of the House of Lords? To persuade! Is it persuasion to tell a barrister of distinguished eloquence and learning that he shall grow old in his stuff gown, while his pupils are seated above him in ermine, because he cannot digest the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian creed? Would Mr. Gladstone think that a religious system which he considers as false, Socinianism for example, was submitted to his free choice, if it were submitted in these terms?—"If you obstinately adhere to the faith of the Nicene fathers, you shall not be burned in Smithfield; you shall not be sent to Dorchester gaol; you shall not even pay double land-tax. But you shall be shut out from all situations in which you might exercise your talents with honour to yourself and advantage to the country. The House of Commons, the bench of magistracy, are not for such as you. You shall see younger men, your inferiors in station and talents, rise to the highest dignities and attract

the gaze of nations, while you are doomed to neglect and obscurity. If you have a son of the highest promise, a son such as other fathers would contemplate with delight, the development of his fine talents and of his generous ambition shall be a torture to you. You shall look on him as a being doomed to lead, as you have led, the abject life of a Roman or a Neapolitan in the midst of the great English people. All those high honours, so much more precious than the most costly gifts of despots, with which a free country decorates its illustrious citizens, shall be to him, as they have been to you, objects not of hope and virtuous emulation, but of hopeless, envious pining. Educate him, if you wish him to feel his degradation. Educate him, if you wish to stimulate his craving for what he never must enjoy. Educate him, if you would imitate the barbarity of that Celtic tyrant who fed his prisoners on salted food till they called eagerly for drink, and then let down an empty cup into the dungeon and left them to die of thirst." Is this to solicit, to persuade, to submit religion to the free choice of man? Would a fine of a thousand pounds, would imprisonment in Newgate for six months, under circumstances not disgraceful, give Mr. Gladstone the pain which he would feel, if he were to be told that he was to be dealt with in the way in which he would himself deal with more than one half of his countrymen?

We are not at all surprised to find such inconsistency even in a man of Mr. Gladstone's talents. The truth is, that every man is, to a great extent, the creature of the age. It is to no purpose that he resists the influence which the vast mass, in which he is but an atom, must exercise on him. He may try to be a man of the tenth century: but he cannot. Whether he will or not, he must be a man of the nineteenth century. He shares in the motion of the

moral as well as in that of the physical world. He can no more be as intolerant as he would have been in the days of the Tudors than he can stand in the evening exactly where he stood in the morning. The globe goes round from west to east; and he must go round with it. When he says that he is where he was, he means only that he has moved at the same rate with all around him. When he says that he has gone a good way to the westward, he means only that he has not gone to the eastward quite so rapidly as his neighbours. Mr. Gladstone's book is, in this respect, a very gratifying performance. It is the measure of what a man can do to be left behind by the world. It is the strenuous effort of a very vigorous mind to keep as far in the rear of the general progress as possible. And yet, with the most intense exertion, Mr. Gladstone cannot help being, on some important points, greatly in advance of Locke himself; and, with whatever admiration he may regard Laud, it is well for him, we can tell him, that he did not write in the days of that zealous primate, who would certainly have refuted the expositions of Scripture which we have quoted, by one of the keenest arguments that can be addressed to human ears.

This is not the only instance in which Mr. Gladstone has shrunk in a very remarkable manner from the consequences of his own theory. If there be in the whole world a state to which this theory is applicable, that state is the British Empire in India. Even we, who detest paternal governments in general, shall admit that the duties of the government of India are, to a considerable extent, paternal. There, the superiority of the governors to the governed in moral science is unquestionable. The conversion of the whole people to the worst form that Christianity ever wore in the darkest ages would be a most happy event. It is not necessary that a man

should be a Christian to wish for the propagation of Christianity in India. It is sufficient that he should be an European not much below the ordinary European level of good sense and humanity. Compared with the importance of the interests at stake, all those Scotch and Irish questions which occupy so large a portion of Mr. Gladstone's book, sink into insignificance. In no part of the world since the days of Theodosius has so large a heathen population been subject to a Christian government. In no part of the world is heathenism more cruel, more licentious, more fruitful of absurd rites and pernicious laws. Surely, if it be the duty of government to use its power and its revenue in order to bring seven millions of Irish Catholics over to the Protestant Church, it is *à fortiori* the duty of the government to use its power and its revenue in order to make seventy millions of idolaters Christians. If it be a sin to suffer John Howard or William Penn to hold any office in England because they are not in communion with the Established Church, it must be a crying sin indeed to admit to high situations men who bow down, in temples covered with emblems of vice, to the hideous images of sensual or malevolent gods.

But no. Orthodoxy, it seems, is more shocked by the priests of Rome than by the priests of Kalee. The plain red brick building, the Cave of Adullam, or Ebenezer Chapel, where uneducated men hear a half-educated man talk of the Christian law of love and the Christian hope of glory, is unworthy of the indulgence which is reserved for the shrine where the Thug suspends a portion of the spoils of murdered travellers, and for the car which grinds its way through the bones of self-immolated pilgrims. "It would be," says Mr. Gladstone, "an absurd exaggeration to maintain it as the part of such

a government as that of the British in India to bring home to the door of every subject at once the ministrations of a new and totally unknown religion." The government ought indeed to desire to propagate Christianity. But the extent to which they must do so must be "limited by the degree in which the people are found willing to receive it." He proposes no such limitation in the case of Ireland. He would give the Irish a Protestant Church whether they like it or not. "We believe," says he, "that that which we place before them is, whether they know it or not, calculated to be beneficial to them; and that, if they know it not now, they will know it when it is presented to them fairly. Shall we, then, purchase their applause at the expense of their substantial, nay, their spiritual interests?"

And why does Mr. Gladstone allow to the Hindoo a privilege which he denies to the Irishman? Why does he reserve his greatest liberality for the most monstrous errors? Why does he pay most respect to the opinion of the least enlightened people? Why does he withhold the right to exercise paternal authority from that one government which is fitter to exercise paternal authority than any government that ever existed in the world? We will give the reason in his own words.

"In British India," he says, "a small number of persons advanced to a higher grade of civilisation, exercise the powers of government over an immensely greater number of less cultivated persons, not by coercion, but under free stipulation with the governed. Now, the rights of a government, in circumstances thus peculiar, obviously depend neither upon the unrestricted theory of paternal principles, nor upon any primordial or fictitious contract of indefinite powers, but upon an express and known treaty, matter of positive agreement, not of natural ordinance."

Where Mr. Gladstone has seen this treaty we

cannot guess; for, though he calls it a "known treaty," we will stake our credit that it is quite unknown both at Calcutta and Madras, both in Leadenhall Street and Cannon Row, that it is not to be found in any of the enormous folios of papers relating to India which fill the book-cases of members of Parliament, that it has utterly escaped the researches of all the historians of our Eastern empire, that, in the long and interesting debates of 1813 on the admission of missionaries to India, debates of which the most valuable part has been excellently preserved by the care of the speakers, no allusion to this important instrument is to be found. The truth is that this treaty is a nonentity. It is by coercion, it is by the sword, and not by free stipulation with the governed, that England rules India; nor is England bound by any contract whatever not to deal with Bengal as she deals with Ireland. She may set up a Bishop of Patna, and a Dean of Hoogley; she may grant away the public revenue for the maintenance of prebendaries of Benares and canons of Moorshedabad; she may divide the country into parishes, and place a rector with a stipend in every one of them; and all this without infringing any positive agreement. If there be such a treaty, Mr. Gladstone can have no difficulty in making known its date, its terms, and, above all, the precise extent of the territory within which we have sinfully bound ourselves to be guilty of practical atheism. The last point is of great importance. For, as the provinces of our Indian empire were acquired at different times, and in very different ways, no single treaty, indeed no ten treaties, will justify the system pursued by our government there.

The plain state of the case is this. No man in his senses would dream of applying Mr. Gladstone's theory to India; because, if so applied, it would

inevitably destroy our empire, and with our empire the best chance of spreading Christianity among the natives. This Mr. Gladstone felt. In some way or other his theory was to be saved, and the monstrous consequences avoided. Of intentional misrepresentation we are quite sure that he is incapable. But we cannot acquit him of that unconscious disingenuousness from which the most upright man, when strongly attached to an opinion, is seldom wholly free. We believe that he recoiled from the ruinous consequences which his system would produce, if tried in India; but that he did not like to say so, lest he should lay himself open to the charge of sacrificing principle to expediency, a word which is held in the utmost abhorrence by all his school. Accordingly, he caught at the notion of a treaty, a notion which must, we think, have originated in some rhetorical expression which he has imperfectly understood. There is one excellent way of avoiding the drawing of a false conclusion from a false *major*; and that is by having a false *minor*. Inaccurate history is an admirable corrective of unreasonable theory. And thus it is in the present case. A bad general rule is laid down, and obstinately maintained, wherever the consequences are not too monstrous for human bigotry. But when they become so horrible that even Christ Church shrinks, that even Oriel stands aghast, the rule is evaded by means of a fictitious contract. One imaginary obligation is set up against another. Mr. Gladstone first preaches to governments the duty of undertaking an enterprise just as rational as the Crusades, and then dispenses them from it on the ground of a treaty which is just as authentic as the donation of Constantine to Pope Sylvester. His system resembles nothing so much as a forged bond with a forged release indorsed on the back of it.

With more show of reason he rests the claims of the Scotch Church on a contract. He considers that contract, however, as most unjustifiable, and speaks of the setting up of the Kirk as a disgraceful blot on the reign of William the Third. Surely it would be amusing, if it were not melancholy, to see a man of virtue and abilities unsatisfied with the calamities which one Church, constituted on false principles, has brought upon the empire, and repining that Scotland is not in the same state with Ireland, that no Scottish agitator is raising rent and putting county members in and out, that no Presbyterian association is dividing supreme power with the government, that no meetings of precursors and repealers are covering the side of the Calton Hill, that twenty-five thousand troops are not required to maintain order on the north of the Tweed, that the anniversary of the Battle of Bothwell Bridge is not regularly celebrated by insult, riot, and murder. We could hardly find a stronger argument against Mr. Gladstone's system than that which Scotland furnishes. The policy which has been followed in that country has been directly opposed to the policy which he recommends. And the consequence is that Scotland having been one of the rudest, one of the poorest, one of the most turbulent countries in Europe, has become one of the most highly civilised, one of the most flourishing, one of the most tranquil. The atrocities which were of common occurrence while an unpopular church was dominant are unknown. In spite of a mutual aversion as bitter as ever separated one people from another, the two kingdoms which compose our island have been indissolubly joined together. Of the ancient national feeling there remains just enough to be ornamental and useful; just enough to inspire the poet, and to kindle a generous and friendly emulation

in the bosom of the soldier. But for all the ends of government the nations are one. And why are they so? The answer is simple. The nations are one for all the ends of government, because in their union the true ends of government alone were kept in sight. The nations are one, because the Churches are two.

Such is the union of England with Scotland, an union which resembles the union of the limbs of one healthful and vigorous body, all moved by one will, all cooperating for common ends. The system of Mr. Gladstone would have produced an union which can be compared only to that which is the subject of a wild Persian fable. King Zohak—we tell the story as Mr. Southey tells it to us—gave the devil leave to kiss his shoulders. Instantly two serpents sprang out, who, in the fury of hunger, attacked his head, and attempted to get at his brain. Zohak pulled them away, and tore them with his nails. But he found that they were inseparable parts of himself, and that what he was lacerating was his own flesh. Perhaps we might be able to find, if we looked round the world, some political union like this, some hideous monster of a state, cursed with one principle of sensation and two principles of volition, self-loathing and self-torturing, made up of parts which are driven by a frantic impulse to inflict mutual pain, yet are doomed to feel whatever they inflict, which are divided by an irreconcilable hatred, yet are blended in an indissoluble identity. Mr. Gladstone, from his tender concern for Zohak, is unsatisfied because the devil has as yet kissed only one shoulder, because there is not a snake mangling and mangled on the left to keep in countenance his brother on the right.

But we must proceed in our examination of his theory. Having, as he conceives, proved that it is the duty of every government to profess some religion or other, right or wrong, and to establish that

religion, he then comes to the question what religion a government ought to prefer: and he decides this question in favour of the form of Christianity established in England. The Church of England is, according to him, the pure Catholic Church of Christ, which possesses the apostolical succession of ministers, and within whose pale is to be found that unity which is essential to truth. For her decisions he claims a degree of reverence far beyond what she has ever, in any of her formularies, claimed for herself; far beyond what the moderate school of Bossuet demands for the Pope; and scarcely short of what that school would ascribe to Pope and General Council together. To separate from her communion is schism. To reject her traditions or interpretations of Scripture is sinful presumption.

Mr. Gladstone pronounces the right of private judgment, as it is generally understood throughout Protestant Europe, to be a monstrous abuse. He declares himself favourable, indeed, to the exercise of private judgment, after a fashion of his own. We have, according to him, a right to judge all the doctrines of the Church of England to be sound, but not to judge any of them to be unsound. He has no objection, he assures us, to active inquiry into religious questions. On the contrary, he thinks such inquiry highly desirable, as long as it does not lead to diversity of opinion; which is much the same thing as if he were to recommend the use of fire that will not burn down houses, or of brandy that will not make men drunk. He conceives it to be perfectly possible for mankind to exercise their intellects vigorously and freely on theological subjects, and yet to come to exactly the same conclusions with each other and with the Church of England. And for this opinion he gives, as far as we have been able to discover, no reason whatever, except that every body

who vigorously and freely exercises his understanding on Euclid's Theorems assents to them. "The activity of private judgment," he truly observes, "and the unity and strength of conviction in mathematics vary directly as each other." On this unquestionable fact he constructs a somewhat questionable argument. Every body who freely inquires agrees, he says, with Euclid. But the Church is as much in the right as Euclid. Why, then, should not every free inquirer agree with the Church? We could put many similar questions. Either the affirmative or the negative of the proposition that King Charles wrote the *Icon Basilike* is as true as that two sides of a triangle are greater than the third side. Why, then, do Dr. Wordsworth and Mr. Hallam agree in thinking two sides of a triangle greater than the third side, and yet differ about the genuineness of the *Icon Basilike*? The state of the exact sciences proves, says Mr. Gladstone, that, as respects religion, "the association of these two ideas, activity of inquiry, and variety of conclusion, is a fallacious one." We might just as well turn the argument the other way, and infer from the variety of religious opinions that there must necessarily be hostile mathematical sects, some affirming, and some denying, that the square of the hypothenuse is equal to the squares of the sides. But we do not think either the one analogy or the other of the smallest value. Our way of ascertaining the tendency of free inquiry is simply to open our eyes and look at the world in which we live; and there we see that free inquiry on mathematical subjects produces unity, and that free inquiry on moral subjects produces discrepancy. There would undoubtedly be less discrepancy if inquirers were more diligent and candid. But discrepancy there will be among the most diligent and candid, as long as the constitution of the human mind, and the nature of moral evidence,

continue unchanged. That we have not freedom and unity together is a very sad thing; and so it is that we have not wings. But we are just as likely to see the one defect removed as the other. It is not only in religion that this discrepancy is found. It is the same with all matters which depend on moral evidence, with judicial questions, for example, and with political questions. All the judges will work a sum in the rule of three on the same principle, and bring out the same conclusion. But it does not follow that, however honest and laborious they may be, they will all be of one mind on the Douglas case. So it is vain to hope that there may be a free constitution under which every representative will be unanimously elected, and every law unanimously passed; and it would be ridiculous for a statesman to stand wondering and bemoaning himself because people who agree in thinking that two and two make four cannot agree about the new poor law, or the administration of Canada.

There are two intelligible and consistent courses which may be followed with respect to the exercise of private judgment; the course of the Romanist, who interdicts private judgment because of its inevitable inconveniences; and the course of the Protestant, who permits private judgment in spite of its inevitable inconveniences. Both are more reasonable than Mr. Gladstone, who would have private judgment without its inevitable inconveniences. The Romanist produces repose by means of stupefaction. The Protestant encourages activity, though he knows that where there is much activity there will be some aberration. Mr. Gladstone wishes for the unity of the fifteenth century with the active and searching spirit of the sixteenth. He might as well wish to be in two places at once.

When Mr. Gladstone says that we "actually require discrepancy of opinion—require and demand

error, falsehood, blindness, and plume ourselves on such discrepancy as attesting a freedom which is only valuable when used for unity in the truth," he expresses himself with more energy than precision. Nobody loves discrepancy for the sake of discrepancy. But a person who conscientiously believes that free inquiry is, on the whole, beneficial to the interests of truth, and that, from the imperfection of the human faculties, wherever there is much free inquiry there will be some discrepancy, may, without impropriety, consider such discrepancy, though in itself an evil, as a sign of good. That there are ten thousand thieves in London is a very melancholy fact. But, looked at in one point of view, it is a reason for exultation. For what other city could maintain ten thousand thieves? What must be the mass of wealth, where the fragments gleaned by lawless pilfering rise to so large an amount? St. Kilda would not support a single pickpocket. The quantity of theft is, to a certain extent, an index of the quantity of useful industry and judicious speculation. And just as we may, from the great number of rogues in a town, infer that much honest gain is made there; so may we often, from the quantity of error in a community, draw a cheering inference as to the degree in which the public mind is turned to those inquiries which alone can lead to rational convictions of truth.

Mr. Gladstone seems to imagine that most Protestants think it possible for the same doctrine to be at once true and false; or that they think it immaterial whether, on a religious question, a man comes to a true or a false conclusion. If there be any Protestants who hold notions so absurd, we abandon them to his censure.

The Protestant doctrine touching the right of private judgment, that doctrine which is the common foundation of the Anglican, the Lutheran, and the Calvinistic Churches, that doctrine by which every

sect of dissenters vindicates its separation, we conceive not to be this, that opposite opinions may both be true; nor this, that truth and falsehood are both equally good; nor yet this, that all speculative error is necessarily innocent; but this, that there is on the face of the earth no visible body to whose decrees men are bound to submit their private judgment on points of faith.

Is there always such a visible body? Was there such a visible body in the year 1500? If not, why are we to believe that there is such a body in the year 1839? If there was such a body in the year 1500, what was it? Was it the Church of Rome? And how can the Church of England be orthodox now, if the Church of Rome was orthodox then?

"In England," says Mr. Gladstone, "the case was widely different from that of the Continent. Her reformation did not destroy, but successfully maintained, the unity and succession of the Church in her apostolical ministry. We have, therefore, still among us the ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, conveying it to us through an unbroken series from our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles. This is to us the ordinary voice of authority; of authority equally reasonable and equally true, whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear."

Mr. Gladstone's reasoning is not so clear as might be desired. We have among us, he says, ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, and their voice is to us the voice of authority. Undoubtedly, if they are witnesses of the truth, their voice is the voice of authority. But this is little more than saying that the truth is the truth. Nor is truth more true because it comes in an unbroken series from the Apostles. The Nicene faith is not more true in the mouth of the Archbishop of Canterbury, than in that of a Moderator of the General Assembly. If our respect for the authority

of the Church is to be only consequent upon our conviction of the truth of her doctrines, we come at once to that monstrous abuse, the Protestant exercise of private judgment. But if Mr. Gladstone means that we ought to believe that the Church of England speaks the truth, because she has the apostolical succession, we greatly doubt whether such a doctrine can be maintained. In the first place, what proof have we of the fact? We have, indeed, heard it said that Providence would certainly have interfered to preserve the apostolical succession in the true Church. But this is an argument fitted for understandings of a different kind from Mr. Gladstone's. He will hardly tell us that the Church of England is the true Church because she has the succession; and that she has the succession because she is the true Church.

What evidence, then, have we for the fact of the apostolical succession? And here we may easily defend the truth against Oxford with the same arguments with which, in old times, the truth was defended by Oxford against Rome. In this stage of our combat with Mr. Gladstone, we need few weapons except those which we find in the well-furnished and well-ordered armoury of Chillingworth.

The transmission of orders from the Apostles to an English clergyman of the present day must have been through a very great number of intermediate persons. Now, it is probable that no clergyman in the Church of England can trace up his spiritual genealogy from bishop to bishop, so far back as the time of the Conquest. There remain many centuries during which the history of the transmission of his orders is buried in utter darkness. And whether he be a priest by succession from the Apostles depends on the question, whether, during that long period, some thousands of events took place, any one of which may, without any gross improbability, be sup-

posed not to have taken place. We have not a tittle of evidence for any one of these events. We do not even know the names or countries of the men to whom it is taken for granted that these events happened. We do not know whether the spiritual ancestors of any one of our contemporaries were Spanish or Armenian, Arian or Orthodox. In the utter absence of all particular evidence, we are surely entitled to require that there should be very strong evidence indeed that the strictest regularity was observed in every generation, and that episcopal functions were exercised by none who were not bishops by succession from the Apostles. But we have no such evidence. In the first place, we have not full and accurate information touching the polity of the Church during the century which followed the persecution of Nero. That, during this period, the overseers of all the little Christian societies scattered through the Roman empire held their spiritual authority by virtue of holy orders derived from the Apostles, cannot be proved by contemporary testimony, or by any testimony which can be regarded as decisive. The question, whether the primitive ecclesiastical constitution bore a greater resemblance to the Anglican or to the Calvinistic model has been fiercely disputed. It is a question on which men of eminent parts, learning, and piety have differed, and do to this day differ very widely. It is a question on which at least a full half of the ability and erudition of Protestant Europe has, ever since the Reformation, been opposed to the Anglican pretensions. Mr. Gladstone himself, we are persuaded, would have the candour to allow that, if no evidence were admitted but that which is furnished by the genuine Christian literature of the first two centuries, judgment would not go in favour of prelacy. And if he looked at the subject as calmly as he would look at a controversy respecting the Roman *Comitia* or

the Anglo-Saxon Wittenagemote, he would probably think that the absence of contemporary evidence during so long a period was a defect which later attestations, however numerous, could but very imperfectly supply. It is surely impolitic to rest the doctrines of the English Church on a historical theory, which, to ninety-nine Protestants out of a hundred, would seem much more questionable than any of those doctrines. Nor is this all. Extreme obscurity overhangs the history of the middle ages; and the facts which are discernible through that obscurity prove that the Church was exceedingly ill regulated. We read of sees of the highest dignity openly sold, transferred backwards and forwards by popular tumult, bestowed sometimes by a profligate woman on her paramour, sometimes by a warlike baron on a kinsman still a stripling. We read of bishops of ten years old, of bishops of five years old, of many popes who were mere boys, and who rivalled the frantic dissoluteness of Caligula, nay, of a female pope. And though this last story, once believed throughout all Europe, has been disproved by the strict researches of modern criticism, the most discerning of those who reject it have admitted that it is not intrinsically improbable. In our own island, it was the complaint of Alfred that not a single priest south of the Thames, and very few on the north, could read either Latin or English. And this illiterate clergy exercised their ministry amidst a rude and half-heathen population, in which Danish pirates, unchristened, or christened by the hundred on a field of battle, were mingled with a Saxon peasantry scarcely better instructed in religion. The state of Ireland was still worse. "Tota illa per universam Hiberniam dissolutio ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ, illa ubique pro consuetudine Christiana sæva subintroducta barbaries," are the expressions of St. Bernard. We are, therefore, at a loss to conceive how any

clergyman can feel confident that his orders have come down correctly. Whether he be really a successor of the Apostles depends on an immense number of such contingencies as these: whether under King Ethelwolf, a stupid priest might not, while baptizing several scores of Danish prisoners who had just made their option between the font and the gallows, inadvertently omit to perform the rite on one of these graceless proselytes; whether, in the seventh century, an impostor, who had never received consecration, might not have passed himself off as a bishop on a rude tribe of Scots; whether a lad of twelve did really, by a ceremony huddled over when he was too drunk to know what he was about, convey the episcopal character to a lad of ten.

Since the first century, not less, in all probability, than a hundred thousand persons have exercised the functions of bishops. That many of these have not been bishops by apostolical succession is quite certain. Hooker admits that deviations from the general rule have been frequent, and with a boldness worthy of his high and statesmanlike intellect, pronounces them to have been often justifiable. "There may be," says he, "sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination made without a bishop. Where the Church must needs have some ordained, and neither hath nor can have possibly a bishop to ordain, in case of such necessity the ordinary institution of God hath given *oftentimes*, and may give place. And therefore we are not simply without exception to urge a lineal descent of power from the Apostles by continued succession of bishops in every effectual ordination." There can be little doubt, we think, that the succession, if it ever existed, has often been interrupted in ways much less respectable. For example, let us suppose, and we are sure that no well-informed person will think the supposition by any means improbable, that,

in the third century, a man of no principle and some parts, who has, in the course of a roving and discreditable life, been a catechumen at Antioch, and has there become familiar with Christian usages and doctrines, afterwards rambles to Marseilles, where he finds a Christian society, rich, liberal, and simple-hearted. He pretends to be a Christian, attracts notice by his abilities and affected zeal, and is raised to the episcopal dignity without having ever been baptized. That such an event might happen, nay, was very likely to happen, cannot well be disputed by any one who has read the Life of Peregrinus. The very virtues, indeed, which distinguished the early Christians, seem to have laid them open to those arts which deceived

> "Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held
> The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven."

Now, this unbaptized impostor is evidently no successor of the Apostles. He is not even a Christian; and all orders derived through such a pretended bishop are altogether invalid. Do we know enough of the state of the world and of the Church in the third century to be able to say with confidence that there were not at that time twenty such pretended bishops? Every such case makes a break in the apostolical succession.

Now, suppose that a break, such as Hooker admits to have been both common and justifiable, or such as we have supposed to be produced by hypocrisy and cupidity, were found in the chain which connected the Apostles with any of the missionaries who first spread Christianity in the wilder parts of Europe, who can say how extensive the effect of this single break may be? Suppose that St. Patrick, for example, if ever there was such a man, or Theodore of Tarsus, who is said to have consecrated in the seventh

century the first bishops of many English sees, had not the true apostolical orders, is it not conceivable that such a circumstance may affect the orders of many clergymen now living? Even if it were possible, which it assuredly is not, to prove that the Church had the apostolical orders in the third century, it would be impossible to prove that those orders were not in the twelfth century so far lost that no ecclesiastic could be certain of the legitimate descent of his own spiritual character. And if this were so, no subsequent precautions could repair the evil.

Chillingworth states the conclusion at which he had arrived on this subject in these very remarkable words:—"That of ten thousand probables no one should be false; that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting, this to me is extremely improbable, and even cousin-german to impossible. So that the assurance hereof is like a machine composed of an innumerable multitude of pieces, of which it is strangely unlikely but some will be out of order; and yet, if any one be so, the whole fabric falls of necessity to the ground: and he that shall put them together, and maturely consider all the possible ways of lapsing and nullifying a priesthood in the Church of Rome, will be very inclinable to think that it is a hundred to one, that among a hundred seeming priests, there is not one true one; nay, that it is not a thing very improbable that, amongst those many millions which make up the Romish hierarchy, there are not twenty true." We do not pretend to know to what precise extent the canonists of Oxford agree with those of Rome as to the circumstances which nullify orders. We will not, therefore, go so far as Chillingworth. We only say that we see no satisfactory proof of the fact, that the Church of England possesses the apostolical succession. And, after all, if Mr. Gladstone could prove

the apostolical succession, what would the apostolical succession prove? He says that "we have among us the ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, conveying it to us through an *unbroken* series from our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles." Is this the fact? Is there any doubt that the orders of the Church of England are generally derived from the Church of Rome? Does not the Church of England declare, does not Mr. Gladstone himself admit, that the Church of Rome teaches much error and condemns much truth? And is it not quite clear, that as far as the doctrines of the Church of England differ from those of the Church of Rome, so far the Church of England conveys the truth through a broken series?

That the founders, lay and clerical, of the Church of England, corrected all that required correction in the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and nothing more, may be quite true. But we never can admit the circumstance that the Church of England possesses the apostolical succession as a proof that she is thus perfect. No stream can rise higher than its fountain. The succession of ministers in the Church of England, derived as it is through the Church of Rome, can never prove more for the Church of England than it proves for the Church of Rome. But this is not all. The Arian Churches which once predominated in the kingdoms of the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Vandals, and the Lombards, were all episcopal churches, and all had a fairer claim than that of England to the apostolical succession, as being much nearer to the apostolical times. In the East, the Greek Church, which is at variance on points of faith with all the Western Churches, has an equal claim to this succession. The Nestorian, the Eutychian, the Jacobite Churches, all heretical, all condemned by councils, of which even

Protestant divines have generally spoken with respect, had an equal claim to the apostolical succession. Now if, of teachers having apostolical orders, a vast majority have taught much error, if a large proportion have taught deadly heresy, if, on the other hand, as Mr. Gladstone himself admits, churches not having apostolical orders, that of Scotland for example, have been nearer to the standard of orthodoxy than the majority of teachers who have had apostolical orders, how can he possibly call upon us to submit our private judgment to the authority of a Church, on the ground that she has these orders?

Mr. Gladstone dwells much on the importance of unity in doctrine. Unity, he tells us, is essential to truth. And this is most unquestionable. But when he goes on to tell us that this unity is the characteristic of the Church of England, that she is one in body and in spirit, we are compelled to differ from him widely. The apostolical succession she may or may not have. But unity she most certainly has not, and never has had. It is matter of perfect notoriety, that her formularies are framed in such a manner as to admit to her highest offices men who differ from each other more widely than a very high Churchman differs from a Catholic, or a very low Churchman from a Presbyterian; and that the general leaning of the Church, with respect to some important questions, has been sometimes one way and sometimes another. Take, for example, the questions agitated between the Calvinists and the Arminians. Do we find in the Church of England, with respect to those questions, that unity which is essential to truth? Was it ever found in the Church? Is it not certain that, at the end of the sixteenth century, the rulers of the Church held doctrines as Calvinistic as ever were held by any Cameronian, and not only held them, but persecuted every body who did not hold them? And is it not

equally certain, that the rulers of the Church have, in very recent times, considered Calvinism as a disqualification for high preferment, if not for holy orders? Look at the questions which Archbishop Whitgift propounded to Barret, questions framed in the very spirit of William Huntington, S.S.[1] And then look at the eighty-seven questions which Bishop Marsh, within our own memory, propounded to candidates for ordination. We should be loth to say that either of these celebrated prelates had intruded himself into a Church whose doctrines he abhorred, and that he deserved to be stripped of his gown. Yet it is quite certain that one or other of them must have been very greatly in error. John Wesley again, and Cowper's friend, John Newton, were both Presbyters of this Church. Both were men of ability. Both we believe to have been men of rigid integrity, men who would not have subscribed a Confession of Faith which they disbelieved for the richest bishopric in the empire. Yet on the subject of predestination Newton was strongly attached to doctrines which Wesley designated as "blasphemy, which might make the ears of a Christian to tingle." Indeed, it will not be disputed that the clergy of the Established Church are divided as to these questions, and that her formularies are not found practically to exclude even scrupulously honest men of both sides from her altars. It is notorious that some of her most distinguished rulers think this latitude a good thing, and would be sorry to see it restricted in favour of either opinion. And herein we must cordially agree with them. But what becomes of the unity of the Church, and of that truth to which unity is essential? Mr. Gladstone tells us that the *Regium Donum* was

[1] One question was, whether God had from eternity reprobated certain persons; and why. The answer which contented the Archbishop was "Affirmative, et quia voluit."

given originally to orthodox Presbyterian ministers, but that part of it is now received by their heterodox successors. "This," he says, "serves to illustrate the difficulty in which governments entangle themselves when they covenant with arbitrary systems of opinion, and not with the Church alone. The opinion passes away, but the gift remains." But is it not clear, that if a strong Supralapsarian had, under Whitgift's primacy, left a large estate at the disposal of the bishops for ecclesiastical purposes, in the hope that the rulers of the Church would abide by Whitgift's theology, he would really have been giving his substance for the support of doctrines which he detested? The opinion would have passed away, and the gift would have remained.

This is only a single instance. What wide differences of opinion respecting the operation of the sacraments are held by bishops, doctors, presbyters of the Church of England, all men who have conscientiously declared their assent to her articles, all men who are, according to Mr. Gladstone, ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, all men whose voices make up what, he tells us, is the voice of true and reasonable authority! Here, again, the Church has not unity; and as unity is the essential condition of truth, the Church has not the truth.

Nay, take the very question which we are discussing with Mr. Gladstone. To what extent does the Church of England allow of the right of private judgment? What degree of authority does she claim for herself in virtue of the apostolical succession of her ministers? Mr. Gladstone, a very able and a very honest man, takes a view of this matter widely differing from the view taken by others whom he will admit to be as able and as honest as himself. People who altogether dissent from him on this subject eat the bread of the Church, preach in her pulpits,

dispense her sacraments, confer her orders, and carry on that apostolical succession, the nature and importance of which, according to him, they do not comprehend. Is this unity? Is this truth?

It will be observed that we are not putting cases of dishonest men who, for the sake of lucre, falsely pretend to believe in the doctrines of an establishment. We are putting cases of men as upright as ever lived, who, differing on theological questions of the highest importance, and avowing that difference, are yet priests and prelates of the same Church. We therefore say, that on some points which Mr. Gladstone himself thinks of vital importance, the Church has either not spoken at all, or, what is for all practical purposes the same thing, has not spoken in language to be understood even by honest and sagacious divines. The religion of the Church of England is so far from exhibiting that unity of doctrine which Mr. Gladstone represents as her distinguishing glory, that it is, in fact, a bundle of religious systems without number. It comprises the religious system of Bishop Tomline, and the religious system of John Newton, and all the religious systems which lie between them. It comprises the religious system of Mr. Newman, and the religious system of the Archbishop of Dublin, and all the religious systems which lie between them. All these different opinions are held, avowed, preached, printed, within the pale of the Church, by men of unquestioned integrity and understanding.

Do we make this diversity a topic of reproach to the Church of England? Far from it. We would oppose with all our power every attempt to narrow her basis? Would to God that, a hundred and fifty years ago, a good king and a good primate had possessed the power as well as the will to widen it! It was a noble enterprise, worthy of William and of

Tillotson. But what becomes of all Mr. Gladstone's eloquent exhortations to unity? Is it not mere mockery to attach so much importance to unity in form and name, where there is so little in substance, to shudder at the thought of two churches in alliance with one state, and to endure with patience the spectacle of a hundred sects battling within one church? And is it not clear that Mr. Gladstone is bound, on all his own principles, to abandon the defence of a church in which unity is not found? Is it not clear that he is bound to divide the House of Commons against every grant of money which may be proposed for the clergy of the Established Church in the colonies? He objects to the vote for Maynooth, because it is monstrous to pay one man to teach truth, and another to denounce that truth as falsehood. But it is a mere chance whether any sum which he votes for the English Church in any colony will go to the maintenance of an Arminian or a Calvinist, of a man like Mr. Froude, or of a man like Dr. Arnold. It is a mere chance, therefore, whether it will go to support a teacher of truth, or one who will denounce that truth as falsehood.

This argument seems to us at once to dispose of all that part of Mr. Gladstone's book which respects grants of public money to dissenting bodies. All such grants he condemns. But surely, if it be wrong to give the money of the public for the support of those who teach any false doctrine, it is wrong to give that money for the support of the ministers of the Established Church. For it is quite certain that, whether Calvin or Arminius be in the right, whether Laud or Burnet be in the right, a great deal of false doctrine is taught by the ministers of the Established Church. If it be said that the points on which the clergy of the Church of England differ ought to be passed over, for the sake of the many important

points on which they agree, why may not the same argument be maintained with respect to other sects which hold in common with the Church of England the fundamental doctrines of Christianity? The principle that a ruler is bound in conscience to propagate religious truth, and to propagate no religious doctrine which is untrue, is abandoned as soon as it is admitted that a gentleman of Mr. Gladstone's opinions may lawfully vote the public money to a chaplain whose opinions are those of Paley or of Simeon. The whole question then becomes one of degree. Of course no individual and no government can justifiably propagate error for the sake of propagating error. But both individuals and governments must work with such machinery as they have; and no human machinery is to be found which will impart truth without some alloy of error. We have shown irrefragably, as we think, that the Church of England does not afford such a machinery. The question then is this; with what degree of imperfection in our machinery must we put up? And to this question we do not see how any general answer can be given. We must be guided by circumstances. It would, for example, be very criminal in a Protestant to contribute to the sending of Jesuit missionaries among a Protestant population. But we do not conceive that a Protestant would be to blame for giving assistance to Jesuit missionaries who might be engaged in converting the Siamese to Christianity. That tares are mixed with the wheat is matter of regret; but it is better that wheat and tares should grow together than that the promise of the year should be blighted.

Mr. Gladstone, we see with deep regret, censures the British Government in India for distributing a small sum among the Catholic priests who minister to the spiritual wants of our Irish soldiers. Now, let us put a case to him. A Protestant gentleman is

attended by a Catholic servant, in a part of the country where there is no Catholic congregation within many miles. The servant is taken ill, and is given over. He desires, in great trouble of mind, to receive the last sacraments of his Church. His master sends off a messenger in a chaise and four, with orders to bring a confessor from a town at a considerable distance. Here a Protestant lays out money for the purpose of causing religious instruction and consolation to be given by a Catholic priest. Has he committed a sin? Has he not acted like a good master and a good Christian? Would Mr. Gladstone accuse him of "laxity of religious principle," of "confounding truth with falsehood," of "considering the support of religion as a boon to an individual, not as a homage to truth"? But how if this servant had, for the sake of his master, undertaken a journey which removed him from the place where he might easily have obtained religious attendance? How if his death were occasioned by a wound received in defending his master? Should we not then say that the master had only fulfilled a sacred obligation of duty? Now, Mr. Gladstone himself owns that "nobody can think that the personality of the state is more stringent, or entails stronger obligations, than that of the individual." How then stands the case of the Indian Government? Here is a poor fellow, enlisted in Clare or Kerry, sent over fifteen thousand miles of sea, quartered in a depressing and pestilential climate. He fights for the Government; he conquers for it; he is wounded; he is laid on his pallet, withering away with fever, under that terrible sun, without a friend near him. He pines for the consolations of that religion which, neglected perhaps in the season of health and vigour, now comes back to his mind, associated with all the overpowering recollections of his earlier days, and of

the home which he is never to see again. And because the state for which he dies sends a priest of his own faith to stand at his bedside, and to tell him, in language which at once commands his love and confidence, of the common Father, of the common Redeemer, of the common hope of immortality, because the state for which he dies does not abandon him in his last moments to the care of heathen attendants, or employ a chaplain of a different creed to vex his departing spirit with a controversy about the Council of Trent, Mr. Gladstone finds that India presents "a melancholy picture," and that there is "a large allowance of false principle" in the system pursued there. Most earnestly do we hope that our remarks may induce Mr. Gladstone to reconsider this part of his work, and may prevent him from expressing in that high assembly, in which he must always be heard with attention, opinions so unworthy of his character.

We have now said almost all that we think it necessary to say respecting Mr. Gladstone's theory. And perhaps it would be safest for us to stop here. It is much easier to pull down than to build up. Yet, that we may give Mr. Gladstone his revenge, we will state concisely our own views respecting the alliance of Church and State.

We set out in company with Warburton, and remain with him pretty sociably till we come to his contract; a contract which Mr. Gladstone very properly designates as a fiction. We consider the primary end of government as a purely temporal end, the protection of the persons and property of men.

We think that government, like every other contrivance of human wisdom, from the highest to the lowest, is likely to answer its main end best when it is constructed with a single view to that end. Mr.

Gladstone, who loves Plato, will not quarrel with us for illustrating our proposition, after Plato's fashion, from the most familiar objects. Take cutlery, for example. A blade which is designed both to shave and to carve will certainly not shave so well as a razor, or carve so well as a carving-knife. An academy of painting, which should also be a bank, would, in all probability, exhibit very bad pictures and discount very bad bills. A gas company, which should also be an infant school society, would, we apprehend, light the streets ill, and teach the children ill. On this principle, we think that government should be organised solely with a view to its main end; and that no part of its efficiency for that end should be sacrificed in order to promote any other end however excellent.

But does it follow from hence that governments ought never to pursue any end other than their main end? In no wise. Though it is desirable that every institution should have a main end, and should be so formed as to be in the highest degree efficient for that main end; yet if, without any sacrifice of its efficiency for that end, it can pursue any other good end, it ought to do so. Thus, the end for which a hospital is built is the relief of the sick, not the beautifying of the street. To sacrifice the health of the sick to splendour of architectural effect, to place the building in a bad air only that it may present a more commanding front to a great public place, to make the wards hotter or cooler than they ought to be, in order that the columns and windows of the exterior may please the passers-by, would be monstrous. But if, without any sacrifice of the chief object, the hospital can be made an ornament to the metropolis, it would be absurd not to make it so.

In the same manner, if a government can, without any sacrifice of its main end, promote any other good

work, it ought to do so. The encouragement of the fine arts, for example, is by no means the main end of government; and it would be absurd, in constituting a government, to bestow a thought on the question, whether it would be a government likely to train Raphaels and Domenichinos. But it by no means follows that it is improper for a government to form a national gallery of pictures. The same may be said of patronage bestowed on learned men, of the publication of archives, of the collecting of libraries, menageries, plants, fossils, antiques, of journeys and voyages for purposes of geographical discovery or astronomical observation. It is not for these ends that government is constituted. But it may well happen that a government may have at its command resources which will enable it, without any injury to its main end, to pursue these collateral ends far more effectually than any individual or any voluntary association could do. If so, government ought to pursue these collateral ends.

It is still more evidently the duty of government to promote, always in subordination to its main end, every thing which is useful as a means for the attaining of that main end. The improvement of steam navigation, for example, is by no means a primary object of government. But as steam vessels are useful for the purpose of national defence, and for the purpose of facilitating intercourse between distant provinces, and of thereby consolidating the force of the empire, it may be the bounden duty of government to encourage ingenious men to perfect an invention which so directly tends to make the state more efficient for its great primary end.

Now, on both these grounds, the instruction of the people may with propriety engage the care of the government. That the people should be well educated is in itself a good thing; and the state ought

therefore to promote this object, if it can do so without any sacrifice of its primary object. The education of the people, conducted on those principles of morality which are common to all the forms of Christianity, is highly valuable as a means of promoting the main object for which government exists, and is on this ground well deserving the attention of rulers. We will not at present go into the general question of education; but will confine our remarks to the subject which is more immediately before us, namely, the religious instruction of the people.

We may illustrate our view of the policy which governments ought to pursue with respect to religious instruction, by recurring to the analogy of a hospital. Religious instruction is not the main end for which a hospital is built; and to introduce into a hospital any regulations prejudicial to the health of the patients, on the plea of promoting their spiritual improvement, to send a ranting preacher to a man who has just been ordered by the physician to lie quiet and try to get a little sleep, to impose a strict observance of Lent on a convalescent who has been advised to eat heartily of nourishing food, to direct, as the bigoted Pius the Fifth actually did, that no medical assistance should be given to any person who declined spiritual attendance, would be the most extravagant folly. Yet it by no means follows that it would not be right to have a chaplain to attend the sick, and to pay such a chaplain out of the hospital funds. Whether it will be proper to have such a chaplain at all, and of what religious persuasion such a chaplain ought to be, must depend on circumstances. There may be a town in which it would be impossible to set up a good hospital without the help of people of different opinions: and religious parties may run so high that, though people of different opinions are willing to contribute for the relief of the sick, they will not concur

in the choice of any one chaplain. The high Churchmen insist that, if there is a paid chaplain, he shall be a high Churchman. The Evangelicals stickle for an Evangelical. Here it would evidently be absurd and cruel to let an useful and humane design, about which all are agreed, fall to the ground, because all cannot agree about something else. The governors must either appoint two chaplains, and pay them both; or they must appoint none; and every one of them must in his individual capacity, do what he can for the purpose of providing the sick with such religious instruction and consolation as will, in his opinion, be most useful to them.

We should say the same of government. Government is not an institution for the propagation of religion, any more than St. George's Hospital is an institution for the propagation of religion: and the most absurd and pernicious consequences would follow, if Government should pursue, as its primary end, that which can never be more than its secondary end, though intrinsically more important than its primary end. But a government which considers the religious instruction of the people as a secondary end, and follows out that principle faithfully, will, we think, be likely to do much good and little harm.

We will rapidly run over some of the consequences to which this principle leads, and point out how it solves some problems which, on Mr. Gladstone's hypothesis, admit of no satisfactory solution.

All persecution directed against the persons or property of men is, on our principle, obviously indefensible. For, the protection of the persons and property of men being the primary end of government, and religious instruction only a secondary end, to secure the people from heresy by making their lives, their limbs, or their estates insecure, would be to sacrifice the primary end to the secondary end. It

would be as absurd as it would be in the governors of an hospital to direct that the wounds of all Arian and Socinian patients should be dressed in such a way as to make them fester.

Again, on our principles, all civil disabilities on account of religious opinions are indefensible. For all such disabilities make government less efficient for its main end: they limit its choice of able men for the administration and defence of the state; they alienate from it the hearts of the sufferers; they deprive it of a part of its effective strength in all contests with foreign nations. Such a course is as absurd as it would be in the governors of an hospital to reject an able surgeon because he is an Universal Restitutionist, and to send a bungler to operate because he is perfectly orthodox.

Again, on our principles, no government ought to press on the people religious instruction, however sound, in such a manner as to excite among them discontents dangerous to public order. For here again government would sacrifice its primary end to an end intrinsically indeed of the highest importance, but still only a secondary end of government, as government. This rule at once disposes of the difficulty about India, a difficulty of which Mr. Gladstone can get rid only by putting in an imaginary discharge in order to set aside an imaginary obligation. There is assuredly no country where it is more desirable that Christianity should be propagated. But there is no country in which the government is so completely disqualified for the task. By using our power in order to make proselytes, we should produce the dissolution of society, and bring utter ruin on all those interests for the protection of which government exists. Here the secondary end is, at present, inconsistent with the primary end, and must therefore be abandoned. Christian instruction given by indi-

viduals and voluntary societies may do much good. Given by the Government it would do unmixed harm. At the same time, we quite agree with Mr. Gladstone in thinking that the English authorities in India ought not to participate in any idolatrous rite; and indeed we are fully satisfied that all such participation is not only unchristian, but also unwise and most undignified.

Supposing the circumstances of a country to be such, that the government may with propriety, on our principles, give religious instruction to a people; we have next to inquire, what religion shall be taught. Bishop Warburton answers, the religion of the majority. And we so far agree with him, that we can scarcely conceive any circumstances in which it would be proper to establish, as the one exclusive religion of the state, the religion of the minority. Such a preference could hardly be given without exciting most serious discontent, and endangering those interests, the protection of which is the first object of government. But we never can admit that a ruler can be justified in helping to spread a system of opinions solely because that system is pleasing to the majority. On the other hand, we cannot agree with Mr. Gladstone, who would of course answer that the only religion which a ruler ought to propagate is the religion of his own conscience. In truth, this is an impossibility. And, as we have shown, Mr. Gladstone himself, whenever he supports a grant of money to the Church of England, is really assisting to propagate, not the precise religion of his own conscience, but some one or more, he knows not how many or which, of the innumerable religions which lie between the confines of Pelagianism and those of Antinomianism, and between the confines of Popery and those of Presbyterianism. In our opinion, that religious instruction which the ruler ought, in his

public capacity, to patronise, is the instruction from which he, in his conscience, believes that the people will learn most good with the smallest mixture of evil. And thus it is not necessarily his own religion that he will select. He will, of course, believe that his own religion is unmixedly good. But the question which he has to consider is, not how much good his religion contains, but how much good the people will learn, if instruction is given them in that religion. He may prefer the doctrines and government of the Church of England to those of the Church of Scotland. But if he knows that a Scotch congregation will listen with deep attention and respect while an Erskine or a Chalmers sets before them the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and that a glimpse of a surplice or a single line of a liturgy would be the signal for hooting and riot, and would probably bring stools and brick-bats about the ears of the minister, he acts wisely if he conveys religious knowledge to the Scotch rather by means of that imperfect Church, as he may think it, from which they will learn much, than by means of that perfect Church from which they will learn nothing. The only end of teaching is, that men may learn ; and it is idle to talk of the duty of teaching truth in ways which only cause men to cling more firmly to falsehood.

On these principles we conceive that a statesman, who might be far indeed from regarding the Church of England with the reverence which Mr. Gladstone feels for her, might yet firmly oppose all attempts to destroy her. Such a statesman may be too well acquainted with her origin to look upon her with superstitious awe. He may know that she sprang from a compromise huddled up between the eager zeal of reformers and the selfishness of greedy, ambitious, and time-serving politicians. He may find in every page of her annals ample cause for

censure. He may feel that he could not, with ease to his conscience, subscribe all her articles. He may regret that all the attempts which have been made to open her gates to large classes of non-conformists should have failed. Her episcopal polity he may consider as of purely human institution. He cannot defend her on the ground that she possesses the apostolical succession; for he does not know whether that succession may not be altogether a fable. He cannot defend her on the ground of her unity; for he knows that her frontier sects are much more remote from each other, than one frontier is from the Church of Rome, or the other from the Church of Geneva. But he may think that she teaches more truth with less alloy of error than would be taught by those who, if she were swept away, would occupy the vacant space. He may think that the effect produced by her beautiful services and by her pulpits on the national mind, is, on the whole, highly beneficial. He may think that her civilising influence is usefully felt in remote districts. He may think that, if she were destroyed, a large portion of those who now compose her congregations would neglect all religious duties, and that a still larger portion would fall under the influence of spiritual mountebanks, hungry for gain, or drunk with fanaticism. While he would with pleasure admit that all the qualities of Christian pastors are to be found in large measure within the existing body of Dissenting ministers, he would perhaps be inclined to think that the standard of intellectual and moral character among that exemplary class of men may have been raised to its present high point and maintained there by the indirect influence of the Establishment. And he may be by no means satisfied that, if the Church were at once swept away, the place of our Sumners and Whateleys would be

supplied by Doddridges and Halls. He may think that the advantages which we have described are obtained, or might, if the existing system were slightly modified, be obtained, without any sacrifice of the paramount objects which all governments ought to have chiefly in view. Nay, he may be of opinion that an institution, so deeply fixed in the hearts and minds of millions, could not be subverted without loosening and shaking all the foundations of civil society. With at least equal ease he would find reasons for supporting the Church of Scotland. Nor would he be under the necessity of resorting to any contract to justify the connexion of two religious establishments with one government. He would think scruples on that head frivolous in any person who is zealous for a Church, of which both Dr. Herbert Marsh and Dr. Daniel Wilson have been bishops. Indeed he would gladly follow out his principles much further. He would have been willing to vote in 1825 for Lord Francis Egerton's resolution, that it is expedient to give a public maintenance to the Catholic clergy of Ireland; and he would deeply regret that no such measure was adopted in 1829.

In this way, we conceive, a statesman might, on our principles, satisfy himself that it would be in the highest degree inexpedient to abolish the Church, either of England or of Scotland.

But if there were, in any part of the world, a national church regarded as heretical by four fifths of the nation committed to its care, a church established and maintained by the sword, a church producing twice as many riots as conversions, a church which, though possessing great wealth and power, and though long backed by persecuting laws, had, in the course of many generations, been found unable to propagate its doctrines, and barely able to

maintain its ground, a church so odious, that fraud and violence, when used against its clear rights of property, were generally regarded as fair play, a church, whose ministers were preaching to desolate walls, and with difficulty obtaining their lawful subsistence by the help of bayonets, such a church, on our principles, could not, we must own, be defended. We should say that the state which allied itself with such a church postponed the primary end of government to the secondary; and that the consequences had been such as any sagacious observer would have predicted. Neither the primary nor the secondary end is attained. The temporal and spiritual interests of the people suffer alike. The minds of men, instead of being drawn to the church are alienated from the state. The magistrate, after sacrificing order, peace, union, all the interests which it is his first duty to protect, for the purpose of promoting pure religion, is forced, after the experience of centuries, to admit that he has really been promoting error. The sounder the doctrines of such a church, the more absurd and noxious the superstition by which those doctrines are opposed, the stronger are the arguments against the policy which has deprived a good cause of its natural advantages. Those who preach to rulers the duty of employing power to propagate truth would do well to remember that falsehood, though no match for truth alone, has often been found more than a match for truth and power together.

A statesman, judging on our principles, would pronounce without hesitation that a church, such as we have last described, never ought to have been set up. Further than this we will not venture to speak for him. He would doubtless remember that the world is full of institutions which, though they never ought to have been set up, yet, having been set up,

ought not to be rudely pulled down; and that it is often wise in practice to be content with the mitigation of an abuse which, looking at it in the abstract, we might feel impatient to destroy.

We have done; and nothing remains but that we part from Mr. Gladstone with the courtesy of antagonists who bear no malice. We dissent from his opinions, but we admire his talents; we respect his integrity and benevolence; and we hope that he will not suffer political avocations so entirely to engross him, as to leave him no leisure for literature and philosophy.

LORD CLIVE. (JANUARY, 1840.)

The Life of Robert Lord Clive; collected from the Family Papers, communicated by the Earl of Powis. By Major-General SIR JOHN MALCOLM, K.C.B. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1836.

WE have always thought it strange that, while the history of the Spanish empire in America is familiarly known to all the nations of Europe, the great actions of our countrymen in the East should, even among ourselves, excite little interest. Every schoolboy knows who imprisoned Montezuma, and who strangled Atahualpa. But we doubt whether one in ten, even among English gentlemen of highly cultivated minds, can tell who won the battle of Buxar, who perpetrated the massacre of Patna, whether Surajah Dowlah ruled in Oude or in Travancore, or whether Holkar was a Hindoo or a Mussulman. Yet the victories of Cortes were gained over savages who had no letters, who were ignorant of the use of metals, who had not broken in a single animal to labour, who wielded no better weapons than those which could be made out of sticks, flints, and fish-bones, who regarded a horse-soldier as a monster, half man and half beast, who took a harquebusier for a sorcerer, able to scatter the thunder and lightning of the skies. The people of India, when we subdued them, were ten times as numerous as the Americans whom the Spaniards vanquished, and were at the same time quite as highly civilised as the victorious Spaniards. They had

reared cities larger and fairer than Saragossa or Toledo, and buildings more beautiful and costly than the Cathedral of Seville. They could show bankers richer than the richest firms of Barcelona or Cadiz, viceroys whose splendour far surpassed that of Ferdinand the Catholic, myriads of cavalry and long trains of artillery which would have astonished the Great Captain. It might have been expected, that every Englishman who takes any interest in any part of history would be curious to know how a handful of his countrymen, separated from their home by an immense ocean, subjugated, in the course of a few years, one of the greatest empires in the world. Yet, unless we greatly err, this subject is, to most readers, not only insipid, but positively distasteful.

Perhaps the fault lies partly with the historians. Mr. Mill's book, though it has undoubtedly great and rare merit, is not sufficiently animated and picturesque to attract those who read for amusement. Orme, inferior to no English historian in style and power of painting, is minute even to tediousness. In one volume he allots, on an average, a closely printed quarto page to the events of every forty-eight hours. The consequence is, that his narrative, though one of the most authentic and one of the most finely written in our language, has never been very popular, and is now scarcely ever read.

We fear that the volumes before us will not much attract those readers whom Orme and Mill have repelled. The materials placed at the disposal of Sir John Malcolm by the late Lord Powis were indeed of great value. But we cannot say that they have been very skilfully worked up. It would, however, be unjust to criticize with severity a work which, if the author had lived to complete and revise it, would probably have been improved by condensation and by a better arrangement. We are more disposed to

perform the pleasing duty of expressing our gratitude to the noble family to which the public owes so much useful and curious information.

The effect of the book, even when we make the largest allowance for the partiality of those who have furnished and of those who have digested the materials, is, on the whole, greatly to raise the character of Lord Clive. We are far indeed from sympathizing with Sir John Malcolm, whose love passes the love of biographers, and who can see nothing but wisdom and justice in the actions of his idol. But we are at least equally far from concurring in the severe judgment of Mr. Mill, who seems to us to show less discrimination in his account of Clive than in any other part of his valuable work. Clive, like most men who are born with strong passions and tried by strong temptations, committed great faults. But every person who takes a fair and enlightened view of his whole career must admit that our island, so fertile in heroes and statesmen, has scarcely ever produced a man more truly great either in arms or in council.

The Clives had been settled ever since the twelfth century, on an estate of no great value, near Market-Drayton, in Shropshire. In the reign of George the First, this moderate but ancient inheritance was possessed by Mr. Richard Clive, who seems to have been a plain man of no great tact or capacity. He had been bred to the law, and divided his time between professional business and the avocations of a small proprietor. He married a lady from Manchester, of the name of Gaskill, and became the father of a very numerous family. His eldest son, Robert, the founder of the British empire in India, was born at the old seat of his ancestors on the twenty-ninth of September, 1725.

Some lineaments of the character of the man

were early discerned in the child. There remain letters written by his relations when he was in his seventh year; and from these letters it appears that, even at that early age, his strong will and his fiery passions, sustained by a constitutional intrepidity which sometimes seemed hardly compatible with soundness of mind, had begun to cause great uneasiness to his family. "Fighting," says one of his uncles, "to which he is out of measure addicted, gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness, that he flies out on every trifling occasion." The old people of the neighbourhood still remember to have heard from their parents how Bob Clive climbed to the top of the lofty steeple of Market-Drayton, and with what terror the inhabitants saw him seated on a stone spout near the summit. They also relate how he formed all the idle lads of the town into a kind of predatory army, and compelled the shopkeepers to submit to a tribute of apples and half-pence, in consideration of which he guaranteed the security of their windows. He was sent from school to school, making very little progress in his learning, and gaining for himself every where the character of an exceedingly naughty boy. One of his masters, it is said, was sagacious enough to prophesy that the idle lad would make a great figure in the world. But the general opinion seems to have been that poor Robert was a dunce, if not a reprobate. His family expected nothing good from such slender parts and such a headstrong temper. It is not strange, therefore, that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writership in the service of the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or to die of a fever at Madras.

Far different were the prospects of Clive from those of the youths whom the East India College now annually sends to the Presidencies of our Asiatic

empire. The Company was then purely a trading corporation. Its territory consisted of a few square miles, for which rent was paid to the native governments. Its troops were scarcely numerous enough to man the batteries of three or four ill constructed forts, which had been erected for the protection of the warehouses. The natives, who composed a considerable part of these little garrisons, had not yet been trained in the discipline of Europe, and were armed, some with swords and shields, some with bows and arrows. The business of the servant of the Company was not, as now, to conduct the judicial, financial, and diplomatic business of a great country, but to take stock, to make advances to weavers, to ship cargoes, and above all to keep an eye on private traders, who dared to infringe the monopoly. The younger clerks were so miserably paid that they could scarcely subsist without incurring debt; the elder enriched themselves by trading on their own account; and those who lived to rise to the top of the service often accumulated considerable fortunes.

Madras, to which Clive had been appointed, was, at this time, perhaps, the first in importance of the Company's settlements. In the preceding century, Fort St. George had arisen on a barren spot beaten by a raging surf; and in the neighbourhood a town, inhabited by many thousands of natives, had sprung up, as towns spring up in the East, with the rapidity of the prophet's gourd. There were already in the suburbs many white villas, each surrounded by its garden, whither the wealthy agents of the Company retired, after the labours of the desk and the warehouse, to enjoy the cool breeze which springs up at sunset from the Bay of Bengal. The habits of these mercantile grandees appear to have been more profuse, luxurious, and ostentatious, than those of the high judicial and political functionaries who have

succeeded them. But comfort was far less understood. Many devices which now mitigate the heat of the climate, preserve health, and prolong life, were unknown. There was far less intercourse with Europe than at present. The voyage by the Cape, which in our time has often been performed within three months, was then very seldom accomplished in six, and was sometimes protracted to more than a year. Consequently, the Anglo-Indian was then much more estranged from his country, much more addicted to Oriental usages, and much less fitted to mix in society after his return to Europe, than the Anglo-Indian of the present day.

Within the fort and its precinct, the English exercised, by permission of the native government, an extensive authority, such as every great Indian landowner exercised within his own domain. But they had never dreamed of claiming independent power. The surrounding country was ruled by the Nabob of the Carnatic, a deputy of the Viceroy of the Deccan, commonly called the Nizam, who was himself only a deputy of the mighty prince designated by our ancestors as the Great Mogul. Those names, once so august and formidable, still remain. There is still a Nabob of the Carnatic, who lives on a pension allowed to him by the English out of the revenues of the province which his ancestors ruled. There is still a Nizam, whose capital is overawed by a British cantonment, and to whom a British resident gives, under the name of advice, commands which are not to be disputed. There is still a Mogul, who is permitted to play at holding courts and receiving petitions, but who has less power to help or hurt than the youngest civil servant of the Company.

Clive's voyage was unusually tedious even for that age. The ship remained some months at the Brazils, where the young adventurer picked up some

knowledge of Portuguese, and spent all his pocket-money. He did not arrive in India till more than a year after he had left England. His situation at Madras was most painful. His funds were exhausted. His pay was small. He had contracted debts. He was wretchedly lodged, no small calamity in a climate which can be made tolerable to an European only by spacious and well placed apartments. He had been furnished with letters of recommendation to a gentleman who might have assisted him; but when he landed at Fort St. George he found that this gentleman had sailed for England. The lad's shy and haughty disposition withheld him from introducing himself to strangers. He was several months in India before he became acquainted with a single family. The climate affected his health and spirits. His duties were of a kind ill suited to his ardent and daring character. He pined for his home, and in his letters to his relations expressed his feelings in language softer and more pensive than we should have expected either from the waywardness of his boyhood, or from the inflexible sternness of his later years. "I have not enjoyed," says he, "one happy day since I left my native country;" and again, "I must confess, at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner. . . . If I should be so far blest as to revisit again my own country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented before me in one view."

One solace he found of the most respectable kind. The Governor possessed a good library, and permitted Clive to have access to it. The young man devoted much of his leisure to reading, and acquired at this time almost all the knowledge of books that he ever possessed. As a boy he had been too idle,

as a man he soon became too busy, for literary pursuits.

But neither climate nor poverty, neither study nor the sorrows of a home-sick exile, could tame the desperate audacity of his spirit. He behaved to his official superiors as he had behaved to his schoolmasters, and was several times in danger of losing his situation. Twice, while residing in the Writers' Buildings, he attempted to destroy himself; and twice the pistol which he snapped at his own head failed to go off. This circumstance, it is said, affected him as a similar escape affected Wallenstein. After satisfying himself that the pistol was really well loaded, he burst forth into an exclamation that surely he was reserved for something great.

About this time an event which at first seemed likely to destroy all his hopes in life suddenly opened before him a new path to eminence. Europe had been, during some years, distracted by the war of the Austrian succession. George the Second was the steady ally of Maria Theresa. The House of Bourbon took the opposite side. Though England was even then the first of maritime powers, she was not, as she has since become, more than a match on the sea for all the nations of the world together; and she found it difficult to maintain a contest against the united navies of France and Spain. In the eastern seas France obtained the ascendency. Labourdonnais, governor of Mauritius, a man of eminent talents and virtues, conducted an expedition to the continent of India in spite of the opposition of the British fleet, landed, assembled an army, appeared before Madras, and compelled the town and fort to capitulate. The keys were delivered up; the French colours were displayed on Fort St. George; and the contents of the Company's warehouses were seized as prize of war by the conquerors. It was stipulated by the capitulation

that the English inhabitants should be prisoners of war on parole, and that the town should remain in the hands of the French till it should be ransomed. Labourdonnais pledged his honour that only a moderate ransom should be required.

But the success of Labourdonnais had awakened the jealousy of his countryman, Dupleix, governor of Pondicherry. Dupleix, moreover, had already begun to revolve gigantic schemes, with which the restoration of Madras to the English was by no means compatible. He declared that Labourdonnais had gone beyond his powers; that conquests made by the French arms on the continent of India were at the disposal of the governor of Pondicherry alone; and that Madras should be rased to the ground. Labourdonnais was compelled to yield. The anger which the breach of the capitulation excited among the English was increased by the ungenerous manner in which Dupleix treated the principal servants of the Company. The Governor and several of the first gentlemen of Fort St. George were carried under a guard to Pondicherry, and conducted through the town in a triumphal procession under the eyes of fifty thousand spectators. It was with reason thought that this gross violation of public faith absolved the inhabitants of Madras from the engagements into which they had entered with Labourdonnais. Clive fled from the town by night in the disguise of a Mussulman, and took refuge at Fort St. David, one of the small English settlements subordinate to Madras.

The circumstances in which he was now placed naturally led him to adopt a profession better suited to his restless and intrepid spirit than the business of examining packages and casting accounts. He solicited and obtained an ensign's commission in the service of the Company, and at twenty-one entered on his military career. His personal courage, of which

he had, while still a writer, given signal proof by a desperate duel with a military bully who was the terror of Fort St. David, speedily made him conspicuous even among hundreds of brave men. He soon began to show in his new calling other qualities which had not before been discerned in him, judgment, sagacity, deference to legitimate authority. He distinguished himself highly in several operations against the French, and was particularly noticed by Major Lawrence, who was then considered as the ablest British officer in India.

Clive had been only a few months in the army when intelligence arrived that peace had been concluded between Great Britain and France. Dupleix was in consequence compelled to restore Madras to the English Company; and the young ensign was at liberty to resume his former business. He did indeed return for a short time to his desk. He again quitted it in order to assist Major Lawrence in some petty hostilities with the natives, and then again returned to it. While he was thus wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of India assumed a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French Crowns; but there arose between the English and French Companies trading to the East a war most eventful and important, a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane.

The empire which Baber and his Moguls reared in the sixteenth century was long one of the most extensive and splendid in the world. In no European kingdom was so large a population subject to a single prince, or so large a revenue poured into the treasury. The beauty and magnificence of the buildings erected by the sovereigns of Hindostan, amazed even travellers who had seen St. Peter's.

The innumerable retinues and gorgeous decorations which surrounded the throne of Delhi dazzled even eyes which were accustomed to the pomp of Versailles. Some of the great viceroys who held their posts by virtue of commissions from the Mogul ruled as many subjects as the King of France or the Emperor of Germany. Even the deputies of these deputies might well rank, as to extent of territory and amount of revenue, with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, or the Elector of Saxony.

There can be little doubt that this great empire, powerful and prosperous as it appears on a superficial view, was yet, even in its best days, far worse governed than the worst governed parts of Europe now are. The administration was tainted with all the vices of Oriental despotism and with all the vices inseparable from the domination of race over race. The conflicting pretensions of the princes of the royal house produced a long series of crimes and public disasters. Ambitious lieutenants of the sovereign sometimes aspired to independence. Fierce tribes of Hindoos, impatient of a foreign yoke, frequently withheld tribute, repelled the armies of the government from the mountain fastnesses, and poured down in arms on the cultivated plains. In spite, however, of much constant maladministration, in spite of occasional convulsions which shook the whole frame of society, this great monarchy, on the whole, retained, during some generations, an outward appearance of unity, majesty, and energy. But throughout the long reign of Aurungzebe, the state, notwithstanding all that the vigour and policy of the prince could effect, was hastening to dissolution. After his death, which took place in the year 1707, the ruin was fearfully rapid. Violent shocks from without cooperated with an incurable decay which was fast proceeding within; and in a few years the empire had undergone utter decomposition.

The history of the successors of Theodosius bears no small analogy to that of the successors of Aurungzebe. But perhaps the fall of the Carlovingians furnishes the nearest parallel to the fall of the Moguls. Charlemagne was scarcely interred when the imbecility and the disputes of his descendants began to bring contempt on themselves and destruction on their subjects. The wide dominion of the Franks was severed into a thousand pieces. Nothing more than a nominal dignity was left to the abject heirs of an illustrious name, Charles the Bald, and Charles the Fat, and Charles the Simple. Fierce invaders, differing from each other in race, language, and religion, flocked, as if by concert, from the farthest corners of the earth, to plunder provinces which the government could no longer defend. The pirates of the Northern Sea extended their ravages from the Elbe to the Pyrenees, and at length fixed their seat in the rich valley of the Seine. The Hungarian in whom the trembling monks fancied that they recognised the Gog or Magog of prophecy, carried back the plunder of the cities of Lombardy to the depth of the Pannonian forests. The Saracen ruled in Sicily, desolated the fertile plains of Campania, and spread terror even to the walls of Rome. In the midst of these sufferings, a great internal change passed upon the empire. The corruption of death began to ferment into new forms of life. While the great body, as a whole, was torpid and passive, every separate member began to feel with a sense, and to move with an energy all its own. Just here, in the most barren and dreary tract of European history, all feudal privileges, all modern nobility, take their source. It is to this point that we trace the power of those princes, who, nominally vassals, but really independent, long governed, with the titles of dukes, marquesses and counts, almost

every part of the dominions which had obeyed Charlemagne.

Such or nearly such was the change which passed on the Mogul empire during the forty years which followed the death of Aurungzebe. A succession of nominal sovereigns, sunk in indolence and debauchery, sauntered away life in secluded palaces, chewing bang, fondling concubines, and listening to buffoons. A succession of ferocious invaders descended through the western passes, to prey on the defenceless wealth of Hindostan. A Persian conqueror crossed the Indus, marched through the gates of Delhi, and bore away in triumph those treasures of which the magnificence had astounded Roe and Bernier, the Peacock Throne, on which the richest jewels of Golconda had been disposed by the most skilful hands of Europe, and the inestimable Mountain of Light, which, after many strange vicissitudes, lately shone in the bracelet of Runjeet Sing, and is now destined to adorn the hideous idol of Orissa. The Afghan soon followed to complete the work of devastation which the Persian had begun. The warlike tribes of Rajpootana threw off the Mussulman yoke. A band of mercenary soldiers occupied Rohilcund. The Seiks ruled on the Indus. The Jauts spread dismay along the Jumna. The highlands which border on the western sea-coast of India poured forth a yet more formidable race, a race which was long the terror of every native power, and which, after many desperate and doubtful struggles, yielded only to the fortune and genius of England. It was under the reign of Aurungzebe that this wild clan of plunderers first descended from their mountains; and soon after his death, every corner of his wide empire learned to tremble at the mighty name of the Mahrattas. Many fertile viceroyalties were entirely subdued by them. Their dominions stretched across

the peninsula from sea to sea. Mahratta captains reigned at Poonah, at Gualior, in Guzerat, in Berar, and in Tanjore. Nor did they, though they had become great sovereigns, therefore cease to be free-booters. They still retained the predatory habits of their forefathers. Every region which was not subject to their rule was wasted by their incursions. Wherever their kettle-drums were heard, the peasant threw his bag of rice on his shoulder, hid his small savings in his girdle, and fled with his wife and children to the mountains or the jungles, to the milder neighbourhood of the hyæna and the tiger. Many provinces redeemed their harvests by the payment of an annual ransom. Even the wretched phantom who still bore the imperial title stooped to pay this ignominious black-mail. The camp-fires of one rapacious leader were seen from the walls of the palace of Delhi. Another, at the head of his innumerable cavalry, descended year after year on the rice-fields of Bengal. Even the European factors trembled for their magazines. Less than a hundred years ago, it was thought necessary to fortify Calcutta against the horsemen of Berar; and the name of the Mahratta ditch still preserves the memory of the danger.

Wherever the viceroys of the Mogul retained authority they became sovereigns. They might still acknowledge in words the superiority of the house of Tamerlane; as a Count of Flanders or a Duke of Burgundy might have acknowledged the superiority of the most helpless driveller among the later Carlovingians. They might occasionally send to their titular sovereign a complimentary present, or solicit from him a title of honour. In truth, however, they were no longer lieutenants removable at pleasure, but independent hereditary princes. In this way originated those great Mussulman houses which

formerly ruled Bengal and the Carnatic, and those which still, though in a state of vassalage, exercise some of the powers of royalty at Lucknow and Hyderabad.

In what was this confusion to end? Was the strife to continue during centuries? Was it to terminate in the rise of another great monarchy? Was the Mussulman or the Mahratta to be the Lord of India? Was another Baber to descend from the mountains, and to lead the hardy tribes of Cabul and Chorasan against a wealthier and less warlike race? None of these events seemed improbable. But scarcely any man, however sagacious, would have thought it possible that a trading company, separated from India by fifteen thousand miles of sea, and possessing in India only a few acres for purposes of commerce, would, in less than a hundred years, spread its empire from Cape Comorin to the eternal snow of the Himalayas; would compel Mahratta and Mahommedan to forget their mutual feuds in common subjection; would tame down even those wild races which had resisted the most powerful of the Moguls; and, having united under its laws a hundred millions of subjects, would carry its victorious arms far to the east of the Burrampooter, and far to the west of the Hydaspes, dictate terms of peace at the gates of Ava, and seat its vassal on the throne of Candahar.

The man who first saw that it was possible to found an European empire on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy was Dupleix. His restless, capacious, and inventive mind had formed this scheme, at a time when the ablest servants of the English Company were busied only about invoices and bills of lading. Nor had he only proposed to himself the end. He had also a just and distinct view of the means by which it was to be attained.

He clearly saw that the greatest force which the princes of India could bring into the field would be no match for a small body of men trained in the discipline, and guided by the tactics, of the West. He saw also that the natives of India might, under European commanders, be formed into armies, such as Saxe or Frederic would be proud to command. He was perfectly aware that the most easy and convenient way in which an European adventurer could exercise sovereignty in India, was to govern the motions, and to speak through the mouth of some glittering puppet dignified by the title of Nabob or Nizam. The arts both of war and policy, which a few years later were employed with such signal success by the English, were first understood and practised by this ingenious and aspiring Frenchman.

The situation of India was such that scarcely any aggression could be without a pretext, either in old laws or in recent practice. All rights were in a state of utter uncertainty; and the Europeans who took part in the disputes of the natives confounded the confusion, by applying to Asiatic politics the public law of the West and analogies drawn from the feudal system. If it was convenient to treat a Nabob as an independent prince, there was an excellent plea for doing so. He was independent in fact. If it was convenient to treat him as a mere deputy of the Court of Delhi, there was no difficulty; for he was so in theory. If it was convenient to consider his office as an hereditary dignity, or as a dignity held during life only, or as a dignity held only during the good pleasure of the Mogul, arguments and precedents might be found for every one of those views. The party who had the heir of Baber in their hands represented him as the undoubted, the legitimate, the absolute sovereign,

whom all subordinate authorities were bound to obey. The party against whom his name was used did not want plausible pretexts for maintaining that the empire was in fact dissolved, and that, though it might be decent to treat the Mogul with respect, as a venerable relic of an order of things which had passed away, it was absurd to regard him as the real master of Hindostan.

In the year 1748, died one of the most powerful of the new masters of India, the great Nizam al Mulk, Viceroy of the Deccan. His authority descended to his son, Nazir Jung. Of the provinces subject to this high functionary, the Carnatic was the wealthiest and the most extensive. It was governed by an ancient Nabob, whose name the English corrupted into Anaverdy Khan.

But there were pretenders to the government both of the viceroyalty and of the subordinate province. Mirzapha Jung, a grandson of Nizam al Mulk, appeared as the competitor of Nazir Jung. Chunda Sahib, son-in-law of a former Nabob of the Carnatic, disputed the title of Anaverdy Khan. In the unsettled state of Indian law, it was easy for both Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib to make out something like a claim of right. In a society altogether disorganized, they had no difficulty in finding greedy adventurers to follow their standards. They united their interests, invaded the Carnatic, and applied for assistance to the French, whose fame had been raised by their success against the English in the recent war on the coast of Coromandel.

Nothing could have happened more pleasing to the subtle and ambitious Dupleix. To make a Nabob of the Carnatic, to make a Viceroy of the Deccan, to rule under their names the whole of southern India; this was indeed an attractive prospect. He allied himself with the pretenders, and sent four hundred

French soldiers, and two thousand sepoys, disciplined after the European fashion, to the assistance of his confederates. A battle was fought. The French distinguished themselves greatly. Anaverdy Khan was defeated and slain. His son, Mahommed Ali, who was afterwards well known in England as the Nabob of Arcot, and who owes to the eloquence of Burke a most unenviable immortality, fled with a scanty remnant of his army to Trichinopoly; and the conquerors became at once masters of almost every part of the Carnatic.

This was but the beginning of the greatness of Dupleix. After some months of fighting, negotiation, and intrigue, his ability and good fortune seemed to have prevailed every where. Nazir Jung perished by the hands of his own followers; Mirzapha Jung was master of the Deccan; and the triumph of French arms and French policy was complete. At Pondicherry all was exultation and festivity. Salutes were fired from the batteries, and *Te Deum* sung in the churches. The new Nizam came thither to visit his allies; and the ceremony of his installation was performed there with great pomp. Dupleix, dressed in the garb worn by Mahommedans of the highest rank, entered the town in the same palanquin with the Nizam, and, in the pageant which followed, took precedence of all the court. He was declared Governor of India from the river Kristna to Cape Comorin, a country about as large as France, with authority superior even to that of Chunda Sahib. He was entrusted with the command of seven thousand cavalry. It was announced that no mint would be suffered to exist in the Carnatic except that at Pondicherry. A large portion of the treasures which former Viceroys of the Deccan had accumulated found its way into the coffers of the French governor. It was rumoured that he had received two hundred

thousand pounds sterling in money, besides many valuable jewels. In fact, there could scarcely be any limit to his gains. He now ruled thirty millions of people with almost absolute power. No honour or emolument could be obtained from the government but by his intervention. No petition, unless signed by him, was perused by the Nizam.

Mirzapha Jung survived his elevation only a few months. But another prince of the same house was raised to the throne by French influence, and ratified all the promises of his predecessor. Dupleix was now the greatest potentate in India. His countrymen boasted that his name was mentioned with awe even in the chambers of the palace of Delhi. The native population looked with amazement on the progress which, in the short space of four years, an European adventurer had made towards dominion in Asia. Nor was the vainglorious Frenchman content with the reality of power. He loved to display his greatness with arrogant ostentation before the eyes of his subjects and of his rivals. Near the spot where his policy had obtained its chief triumph, by the fall of Nazir Jung and the elevation of Mirzapha, he determined to erect a column, on the four sides of which four pompous inscriptions, in four languages, should proclaim his glory to all the nations of the East. Medals stamped with emblems of his successes were buried beneath the foundations of this stately pillar, and round it arose a town bearing the haughty name of Dupleix Fatihabad, which is, being interpreted, the City of the Victory of Dupleix.

The English had made some feeble and irresolute attempts to stop the rapid and brilliant career of the rival Company, and continued to recognise Mahommed Ali as Nabob of the Carnatic. But the dominions of Mahommed Ali consisted of Trichinopoly alone; and Trichinopoly was now invested by

Chunda Sahib and his French auxiliaries. To raise the siege seemed impossible. The small force which was then at Madras had no commander. Major Lawrence had returned to England; and not a single officer of established character remained in the settlement. The natives had learned to look with contempt on the mighty nation which was soon to conquer and to rule them. They had seen the French colours flying on Fort St. George; they had seen the chiefs of the English factory led in triumph through the streets of Pondicherry; they had seen the arms and counsels of Dupleix every where successful, while the opposition which the authorities of Madras had made to his progress, had served only to expose their own weakness, and to heighten his glory. At this moment, the valour and genius of an obscure English youth suddenly turned the tide of fortune.

Clive was now twenty-five years old. After hesitating for some time between a military and a commercial life, he had at length been placed in a post which partook of both characters, that of commissary to the troops, with the rank of captain. The present emergency called forth all his powers. He represented to his superiors that, unless some vigorous effort were made, Trichinopoly would fall, the house of Anaverdy Khan would perish, and the French would become the real masters of the whole peninsula of India. It was absolutely necessary to strike some daring blow. If an attack were made on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, and the favourite residence of the Nabobs, it was not impossible that the siege of Trichinopoly would be raised. The heads of the English settlement, now thoroughly alarmed by the success of Dupleix, and apprehensive that, in the event of a new war between France and Great Britain, Madras would be instantly taken and destroyed, approved of Clive's plan, and entrusted the execution of it to him-

self. The young captain was put at the head of two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred sepoys, armed and disciplined after the European fashion. Of the eight officers who commanded this little force under him, only two had ever been in action, and four of the eight were factors of the Company, whom Clive's example had induced to offer their services. The weather was stormy; but Clive pushed on, through thunder, lightning, and rain, to the gates of Arcot. The garrison, in a panic, evacuated the fort, and the English entered it without a blow.

But Clive well knew that he should not be suffered to retain undisturbed possession of his conquest. He instantly began to collect provisions, to throw up works, and to make preparations for sustaining a siege. The garrison, which had fled at his approach, had now recovered from its dismay, and, having been swollen by large reinforcements from the neighbourhood to a force of three thousand men, encamped close to the town. At dead of night, Clive marched out of the fort, attacked the camp by surprise, slew great numbers, dispersed the rest, and returned to his quarters without having lost a single man.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, were besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached four thousand men from his camp, and sent them to Arcot. They were speedily joined by the remains of the force which Clive had lately scattered. They were further strengthened by two thousand men from Vellore, and by a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers whom Dupleix despatched from Pondicherry. The whole of this army, amounting to about ten thousand men, was under the command of Rajah Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib.

Rajah Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot,

which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The wall were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans and two hundred sepoys. Only four officers were left; the stock of provisions was scanty; and the commander, who had to conduct the defence under circumstances so discouraging, was a young man of five and twenty, who had been bred a book-keeper.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence, with a firmness, vigilance, and ability which would have done honour to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, colour, language, manners, and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed anything that is related of the Tenth Legion of Cæsar, or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. The sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice, would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed. But there was hope from another quarter. A body of six thousand Mahrattas, half soldiers, half robbers, under the command

of a chief named Morari Row, had been hired to assist Mahommed Ali; but thinking the French power irresistible, and the triumph of Chunda Sahib certain, they had hitherto remained inactive on the frontiers of the Carnatic. The fame of the defence of Arcot roused them from their torpor. Morari Row declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves. Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion. It was necessary for him to be expeditious. He first tried negotiation. He offered large bribes to Clive, which were rejected with scorn. He vowed that, if his proposals were not accepted, he would instantly storm the fort, and put every man in it to the sword. Clive told him in reply, with characteristic haughtiness, that his father was an usurper, that his army was a rabble, and that he would do well to think twice before he sent such poltroons into a breach defended by English soldiers.

Rajah Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise. It was the great Mahommedan festival which is sacred to the memory of Hosein the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching than the event which gave rise to that solemnity. The mournful legend relates how the chief of the Fatimites, when all his brave followers had perished round him, drank his latest draught of water, and uttered his latest prayer, how the assassins carried his head in triumph, how the tyrant smote the lifeless lips with his staff, and how a few old men recollected with tears that they had seen those lips pressed to the lips of the Prophet of God. After the lapse of near twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslem of

India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation that some, it is said, have given up the ghost from the mere effect of mental excitement. They believe that whoever, during this festival, falls in arms against the infidels, atones by his death for all the sins of his life, and passes at once to the garden of the Houris. It was at this time that Rajah Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal, and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bang, rushed furiously to the attack.

Clive had received secret intelligence of the design, had made his arrangements, and, exhausted by fatigue, had thrown himself on his bed. He was awakened by the alarm, and was instantly at his post. The enemy advanced driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round, and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude which had urged them forward. A raft was launched on the water which filled one part of the ditch. Clive, perceiving that his gunners at that post did not understand their business, took the management of a piece of artillery himself, and cleared the raft in a few minutes. Where the moat was dry, the assailants mounted with great boldness; but they were received with a fire so heavy and so well-directed, that it soon quelled the courage even of fanaticism and of intoxication. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired behind the ditch.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when day broke, the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving to the English several guns and a large quantity of ammunition.

The news was received at Fort St. George with transports of joy and pride. Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command. Two hundred English soldiers, and seven hundred sepoys were sent to him, and with this force he instantly commenced offensive operations. He took the fort of Timery, effected a junction with a division of Morari Row's army, and hastened, by forced marches, to attack Rajah Sahib, who was at the head of about five thousand men, of whom three hundred were French. The action was sharp; but Clive gained a complete victory. The military chest of Rajah Sahib fell into the hands of the conquerors. Six hundred sepoys, who had served in the enemy's army, came over to Clive's quarters, and were taken into the British service. Conjeveram surrendered without a blow. The governor of Arnee deserted Chunda Sahib, and recognised the title of Mahommed Ali.

Had the entire direction of the war been entrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appeared in all the movements of the English, except where he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they found elsewhere. The effect of this languor was that in no long time Rajah Sahib, at the head of a considerable army, in which were four hundred French troops, appeared almost under the guns of Fort St. George and laid waste the villas

and gardens of the gentlemen of the English settlement. But he was again encountered and defeated by Clive. More than a hundred of the French were killed or taken, a loss more serious than that of thousands of natives. The victorious army marched from the field of battle to Fort St. David. On the road lay the City of the Victory of Dupleix, and the stately monument which was designed to commemorate the triumphs of France in the East. Clive ordered both the city and the monument to be rased to the ground. He was induced, we believe, to take this step, not by personal or national malevolence, but by a just and profound policy. The town and its pompous name, the pillar and its vaunting inscriptions, were among the devices by which Dupleix had laid the public mind of India under a spell. This spell it was Clive's business to break. The natives had been taught that France was confessedly the first power in Europe, and that the English did not presume to dispute her supremacy. No measure could be more effectual for the removing of this delusion than the public and solemn demolition of the French trophies.

The government of Madras, encouraged by these events, determined to send a strong detachment, under Clive, to reinforce the garrison of Trichinopoly. But just at this conjuncture, Major Lawrence arrived from England, and assumed the chief command. From the waywardness and impatience of control which had characterized Clive, both at school and in the counting-house, it might have been expected that he would not, after such achievements, act with zeal and good humour in a subordinate capacity. But Lawrence had early treated him with kindness; and it is bare justice to Clive to say that, proud and overbearing as he was, kindness was never thrown away upon him. He cheerfully placed

himself under the orders of his old friend, and exerted himself as strenuously in the second post as he could have done in the first. Lawrence well knew the value of such assistance. Though himself gifted with no intellectual faculty higher than plain good sense, he fully appreciated the powers of his brilliant coadjutor. Though he had made a methodical study of military tactics, and, like all men regularly bred to a profession, was disposed to look with disdain on interlopers, he had yet liberality enough to acknowledge that Clive was an exception to common rules. "Some people," he wrote, "are pleased to term Captain Clive fortunate and lucky; but, in my opinion, from the knowledge I have of the gentleman, he deserved and might expect from his conduct every thing as it fell out;—a man of an undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and of a presence of mind which never left him in the greatest danger—born a soldier; for, without a military education of any sort, or much conversing with any of the profession, from his judgment and good sense, he led on an army like an experienced officer and a brave soldier, with a prudence that certainly warranted success."

The French had no commander to oppose to the two friends. Dupleix, not inferior in talents for negotiation and intrigue to any European who has borne a part in the revolutions of India, was ill qualified to direct in person military operations. He had not been bred a soldier, and had no inclination to become one. His enemies accused him of personal cowardice; and he defended himself in a strain worthy of Captain Bobadil. He kept away from shot, he said, because silence and tranquillity were propitious to his genius, and he found it difficult to pursue his meditations amidst the noise of fire-arms. He was thus under the necessity of entrusting to

others the execution of his great warlike designs; and he bitterly complained that he was ill served. He had indeed been assisted by one officer of eminent merit, the celebrated Bussy. But Bussy had marched northward with the Nizam, and was fully employed in looking after his own interests, and those of France, at the court of that prince. Among the officers who remained with Dupleix, there was not a single man of capacity; and many of them were boys, at whose ignorance and folly the common soldiers laughed.

The English triumphed every where. The besiegers of Trichinopoly were themselves besieged and compelled to capitulate. Chunda Sahib fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, and was put to death, at the instigation probably of his competitor, Mahommed Ali. The spirit of Dupleix, however, was unconquerable, and his resources inexhaustible. From his employers in Europe he no longer received help or countenance. They condemned his policy. They gave him no pecuniary assistance. They sent him for troops only the sweepings of the galleys. Yet still he persisted, intrigued, bribed, promised, lavished his private fortune, strained his credit, procured new diplomas from Delhi, raised up new enemies to the government of Madras on every side, and found tools even among the allies of the English Company. But all was in vain. Slowly, but steadily, the power of Britain continued to increase, and that of France to decline.

The health of Clive had never been good during his residence in India; and his constitution was now so much impaired that he determined to return to England. Before his departure he undertook a service of considerable difficulty, and performed it with his usual vigour and dexterity. The forts of Covelong and Chingleput were occupied by French

garrisons. It was determined to send a force against them. But the only force available for this purpose was of such a description that no officer but Clive would risk his reputation by commanding it. It consisted of five hundred newly levied sepoys, and two hundred recruits who had just landed from England, and who were the worst and lowest wretches that the Company's crimps could pick up in the flash-houses of London. Clive, ill and exhausted as he was, undertook to make an army of this undisciplined rabble, and marched with them to Covelong. A shot from the fort killed one of these extraordinary soldiers; on which all the rest faced about and ran away, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Clive rallied them. On another occasion, the noise of a gun terrified the sentinels so much that one of them was found, some hours later, at the bottom of a well. Clive gradually accustomed them to danger, and, by exposing himself constantly in the most perilous situations, shamed them into courage. He at length succeeded in forming a respectable force out of his unpromising materials. Covelong fell. Clive learned that a strong detachment was marching to relieve it from Chingleput. He took measures to prevent the enemy from learning that they were too late, laid an ambuscade for them on the road, killed a hundred of them with one fire, took three hundred prisoners, pursued the fugitives to the gates of Chingleput, laid siege instantly to that fastness, reputed one of the strongest in India, made a breach, and was on the point of storming when the French commandant capitulated and retired with his men.

Clive returned to Madras victorious, but in a state of health which rendered it impossible for him to remain there long. He married at this time a young lady of the name of Maskelyne, sister of the eminent

mathematician, who long held the post of Astronomer Royal. She is described as handsome and accomplished; and her husband's letters, it is said, contain proofs that he was devotedly attached to her.

Almost immediately after the marriage, Clive embarked with his bride for England. He returned a very different person from the poor slighted boy who had been sent out ten years before to seek his fortune. He was only twenty-seven; yet his country already respected him as one of her first soldiers. There was then general peace in Europe. The Carnatic was the only part of the world where the English and French were in arms against each other. The vast schemes of Dupleix had excited no small uneasiness in the city of London; and the rapid turn of fortune, which was chiefly owing to the courage and talents of Clive, had been hailed with great delight. The young captain was known at the India House by the honourable nickname of General Clive, and was toasted by that appellation at the feasts of the Directors. On his arrival in England, he found himself an object of general interest and admiration. The East India Company thanked him for his services in the warmest terms, and bestowed on him a sword set with diamonds. With rare delicacy, he refused to receive this token of gratitude unless a similar compliment were paid to his friend and commander, Lawrence.

It may easily be supposed that Clive was most cordially welcomed home by his family, who were delighted by his success, though they seem to have been hardly able to comprehend how their naughty idle Bobby had become so great a man. His father had been singularly hard of belief. Not until the news of the defence of Arcot arrived in England was the old gentleman heard to growl out that, after all, the booby had something in him. His

expressions of approbation became stronger and stronger as news arrived of one brilliant exploit after another; and he was at length immoderately fond and proud of his son.

Clive's relations had very substantial reasons for rejoicing at his return. Considerable sums of prize-money had fallen to his share; and he had brought home a moderate fortune, part of which he expended in extricating his father from pecuniary difficulties, and in redeeming the family estate. The remainder he appears to have dissipated in the course of about two years. He lived splendidly, dressed gaily even for those times, kept a carriage and saddle horses, and, not content with these ways of getting rid of his money, resorted to the most speedy and effectual of all modes of evacuation, a contested election followed by a petition.

At the time of the general election of 1754, the government was in a very singular state. There was scarcely any formal opposition. The Jacobites had been cowed by the issue of the last rebellion. The Tory party had fallen into utter contempt. It had been deserted by all the men of talents who had belonged to it, and had scarcely given a symptom of life during some years. The small faction which had been held together by the influence and promises of Prince Frederic, had been dispersed by his death. Almost every public man of distinguished talents in the kingdom, whatever his early connexions might have been, was in office, and called himself a Whig. But this extraordinary appearance of concord was quite delusive. The administration itself was distracted by bitter enmities and conflicting pretensions. The chief object of its members was to depress and supplant each other. The prime minister, Newcastle, weak, timid, jealous, and perfidious, was at once detested and despised by some of the most important

members of his government, and by none more than by Henry Fox, the Secretary at War. This able, daring, and ambitious man seized every opportunity of crossing the First Lord of the Treasury, from whom he well knew that he had little to dread and little to hope; for Newcastle was through life equally afraid of breaking with men of parts and of promoting them.

Newcastle had set his heart on returning two members for St. Michael, one of those wretched Cornish boroughs which were swept away by the Reform Act in 1832. He was opposed by Lord Sandwich, whose influence had long been paramount there: and Fox exerted himself strenuously in Sandwich's behalf. Clive, who had been introduced to Fox, and very kindly received by him, was brought forward on the Sandwich interest, and was returned. But a petition was presented against the return, and was backed by the whole influence of the Duke of Newcastle.

The case was heard, according to the usage of that time, before a committee of the whole House. Questions respecting elections were then considered merely as party questions. Judicial impartiality was not even affected. Sir Robert Walpole was in the habit of saying openly that, in election battles, there ought to be no quarter. On the present occasion the excitement was great. The matter really at issue was, not whether Clive had been properly or improperly returned, but whether Newcastle or Fox was to be master of the new House of Commons, and consequently first minister. The contest was long and obstinate, and success seemed to lean sometimes to one side and sometimes to the other. Fox put forth all his rare powers of debate, beat half the lawyers in the House at their own weapons, and carried division after division against the whole

influence of the Treasury. The committee decided in Clive's favour. But when the resolution was reported to the House, things took a different course. The remnant of the Tory Opposition, contemptible as it was, had yet sufficient weight to turn the scale between the nicely-balanced parties of Newcastle and Fox. Newcastle the Tories could only despise. Fox they hated, as the boldest and most subtle politician and the ablest debater among the Whigs, as the steady friend of Walpole, as the devoted adherent of the Duke of Cumberland. After wavering till the last moment, they determined to vote in a body with the Prime Minister's friends. The consequence was that the House, by a small majority, rescinded the decision of the committee, and Clive was unseated.

Ejected from Parliament and straitened in his means, he naturally began to look again towards India. The Company and the Government were eager to avail themselves of his services. A treaty favourable to England had indeed been concluded in the Carnatic. Dupleix had been superseded, and had returned with the wreck of his immense fortune to Europe, where calumny and chicanery soon hunted him to his grave. But many signs indicated that a war between France and Great Britain was at hand; and it was therefore thought desirable to send an able commander to the Company's settlements in India. The Directors appointed Clive governor of Fort St. David. The King gave him the commission of a lieutenant-colonel in the British army, and in 1755 he again sailed for Asia.

The first service on which he was employed after his return to the East was the reduction of the stronghold of Gheriah. This fortress, built on a craggy promontory, and almost surrounded by the ocean, was the den of a pirate named Angria, whose barks had long been the terror of the Arabian Gulf. Ad-

miral Watson, who commanded the English squadron in the Eastern seas, burned Angria's fleet, while Clive attacked the fastness by land. The place soon fell, and a booty of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling was divided among the conquerors.

After this exploit, Clive proceeded to his government of Fort St. David. Before he had been there two months, he received intelligence which called forth all the energy of his bold and active mind.

Of the provinces which had been subject to the house of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal. No part of India possessed such natural advantages, both for agriculture and for commerce. The Ganges, rushing through a hundred channels to the sea, has formed a vast plain of rich mould which, even under the tropical sky, rivals the verdure of an English April. The rice fields yield an increase such as is elsewhere unknown. Spices, sugar, vegetable oils, are produced with marvellous exuberance. The rivers afford an inexhaustible supply of fish. The desolate islands along the sea-coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers, supply the cultivated districts with abundance of salt. The great stream which fertilises the soil is, at the same time, the chief highway of Eastern commerce. On its banks, and on those of its tributary waters, are the wealthiest marts, the most splendid capitals, and the most sacred shrines of India. The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature. In spite of the Mussulman despot, and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly. Distant provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries; and the noble ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms. The

race by whom this rich tract was peopled, enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful employments, bore the same relation to other Asiatics which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe. The Castilians have a proverb, that in Valencia the earth is water and the men women; and the description is at least equally applicable to the vast plain of the Lower Ganges. Whatever the Bengalee does he does languidly. His favourite pursuits are sedentary. He shrinks from bodily exertion; and, though voluble in dispute, and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in a personal conflict, and scarcely ever enlists as a soldier. We doubt whether there be a hundred genuine Bengalees in the whole army of the East India Company. There never, perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature and by habit for a foreign yoke.

The great commercial companies of Europe had long possessed factories in Bengal. The French were settled, as they still are, at Chandernagore on the Hoogley. Higher up the stream the Dutch traders held Chinsurah. Nearer to the sea the English had built Fort William. A church and ample warehouses rose in the vicinity. A row of spacious houses, belonging to the chief factors of the East India Company, lined the banks of the river; and in the neighbourhood had sprung up a large and busy native town, where some Hindoo merchants of great opulence had fixed their abode. But the tract now covered by the palaces of Chowringhee contained only a few miserable huts thatched with straw. A jungle, abandoned to water-fowl and alligators, covered the site of the present Citadel, and the Course, which is now daily crowded at sunset with the gayest equipages of Calcutta. For the ground on which the settlement stood, the English, like other great land-

holders, paid rent to the government; and they were, like other great landholders, permitted to exercise a certain jurisdiction within their domain.

The great province of Bengal, together with Orissa and Bahar, had long been governed by a viceroy, whom the English called Aliverdy Khan, and who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, had become virtually independent. He died in 1756, and the sovereignty descended to his grandson, a youth under twenty years of age, who bore the name of Surajah Dowlah. Oriental despots are perhaps the worst class of human beings; and this unhappy boy was one of the worst specimens of his class. His understanding was naturally feeble, and his temper naturally unamiable. His education had been such as would have enervated even a vigorous intellect and perverted even a generous disposition. He was unreasonable, because nobody ever dared to reason with him, and selfish, because he had never been made to feel himself dependent on the good will of others. Early debauchery had unnerved his body and his mind. He indulged immoderately in the use of ardent spirits, which inflamed his weak brain almost to madness. His chosen companions were flatterers, sprung from the dregs of the people, and recommended by nothing but buffoonery and servility. It is said that he had arrived at that last stage of human depravity, when cruelty becomes pleasing for its own sake, when the sight of pain, as pain, where no advantage is to be gained, no offence punished, no danger averted, is an agreeable excitement. It had early been his amusement to torture beasts and birds; and, when he grew up, he enjoyed with still keener relish the misery of his fellow-creatures.

From a child Surajah Dowlah had hated the English. It was his whim to do so; and his whims were never opposed. He had also formed a very

exaggerated notion of the wealth which might be obtained by plundering them; and his feeble and uncultivated mind was incapable of perceiving that the riches of Calcutta, had they been even greater than he imagined, would not compensate him for what he must lose, if the European trade, of which Bengal was a chief seat, should be driven by his violence to some other quarter. Pretexts for a quarrel were readily found. The English, in expectation of a war with France, had begun to fortify their settlement without special permission from the Nabob. A rich native, whom he longed to plunder, had taken refuge at Calcutta, and had not been delivered up. On such grounds as these Surajah Dowlah marched with a great army against Fort William.

The servants of the Company at Madras had been forced by Dupleix to become statesmen and soldiers. Those in Bengal were still mere traders, and were terrified and bewildered by the approaching danger. The governor, who had heard much of Surajah Dowlah's cruelty, was frightened out of his wits, jumped into a boat, and took refuge in the nearest ship. The military commandant thought that he could not do better than follow so good an example. The fort was taken after a feeble resistance; and great numbers of the English fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Nabob seated himself with regal pomp in the principal hall of the factory, and ordered Mr. Holwell, the first in rank among the prisoners, to be brought before him. His Highness talked about the insolence of the English, and grumbled at the smallness of the treasure which he had found; but promised to spare their lives, and retired to rest.

Then was committed that great crime, memorable for its singular atrocity, memorable for the tremendous retribution by which it was followed. The

English captives were left at the mercy of the guards, and the guards determined to secure them for the night in the prison of the garrison, a chamber known by the fearful name of the Black Hole. Even for a single European malefactor, that dungeon would, in such a climate, have been too close and narrow. The space was only twenty feet square. The air-holes were small and obstructed. It was the summer solstice, the season when the fierce heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to natives of England by lofty halls and by the constant waving of fans. The number of the prisoners was one hundred and forty-six. When they were ordered to enter the cell, they imagined that the soldiers were joking; and, being in high spirits on account of the promise of the Nabob to spare their lives, they laughed and jested at the absurdity of the notion. They soon discovered their mistake. They expostulated; they entreated; but in vain. The guards threatened to cut down all who hesitated. The captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword, and the door was instantly shut and locked upon them.

Nothing in history or fiction, not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, after he had wiped his bloody lips on the scalp of his murderer, approaches the horrors which were recounted by the few survivors of that night. They cried for mercy. They strove to burst the door. Holwell who, even in that extremity, retained some presence of mind, offered large bribes to the gaolers. But the answer was that nothing could be done without the Nabob's orders, that the Nabob was asleep, and that he would be angry if anybody woke him. Then the prisoners went mad with despair. They trampled each other down, fought for the places at the windows, fought for the pittance of water with which the cruel mercy of the murderers mocked their agonies, raved, prayed,

blasphemed, implored the guards to fire among them. The gaolers in the meantime held lights to the bars, and shouted with laughter at the frantic struggles of their victims. At length the tumult died away in low gaspings and moanings. The day broke. The Nabob had slept off his debauch, and permitted the door to be opened. But it was some time before the soldiers could make a lane for the survivors, by piling up on each side the heaps of corpses on which the burning climate had already begun to do its loathsome work. When at length a passage was made, twenty-three ghastly figures, such as their own mothers would not have known, staggered one by one out of the charnel-house. A pit was instantly dug. The dead bodies, a hundred and twenty-three in number, were flung into it promiscuously, and covered up.

But these things which, after a lapse of more than eighty years, cannot be told or read without horror, awakened neither remorse nor pity in the bosom of the savage Nabob. He inflicted no punishment on the murderers. He showed no tenderness to the survivors. Some of them, indeed, from whom nothing was to be got, were suffered to depart; but those from whom it was thought that any thing could be extorted were treated with execrable cruelty. Holwell, unable to walk, was carried before the tyrant, who reproached him, threatened him, and sent him up the country in irons, together with some other gentlemen who were suspected of knowing more than they chose to tell about the treasures of the Company. These persons, still bowed down by the sufferings of that great agony, were lodged in miserable sheds, and fed only with grain and water, till at length the intercessions of the female relations of the Nabob procured their release. One Englishwoman had survived that night. She was placed in the haram of the Prince at Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah, in the meantime, sent letters to his nominal sovereign at Delhi, describing the late conquest in the most pompous language. He placed a garrison in Fort William, forbade Englishmen to dwell in the neighbourhood, and directed that, in memory of his great actions, Calcutta should thenceforward be called Alinagore, that is to say, the Port of God.

In August the news of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras, and excited the fiercest and bitterest resentment. The cry of the whole settlement was for vengeance. Within forty-eight hours after the arrival of the intelligence it was determined that an expedition should be sent to the Hoogley, and that Clive should be at the head of the land forces. The naval armament was under the command of Admiral Watson. Nine hundred English infantry, fine troops and full of spirit, and fifteen hundred sepoys, composed the army which sailed to punish a Prince who had more subjects than Louis the Fifteenth or the Empress Maria Theresa. In October the expedition sailed; but it had to make its way against adverse winds, and did not reach Bengal till December.

The Nabob was revelling in fancied security at Moorshedabad. He was so profoundly ignorant of the state of foreign countries that he often used to say that there were not ten thousand men in all Europe; and it had never occurred to him as possible that the English would dare to invade his dominions. But, though undisturbed by any fear of their military power, he began to miss them greatly. His revenues fell off; and his ministers succeeded in making him understand that a ruler may sometimes find it more profitable to protect traders in the open enjoyment of their gains than to put them to the torture for the purpose of discovering hidden chests of gold and jewels. He was already disposed to permit

the Company to resume its mercantile operations in his country, when he received the news that an English armament was in the Hoogley. He instantly ordered all his troops to assemble at Moorshedabad, and marched towards Calcutta.

Clive had commenced operations with his usual vigour. He took Budgebudge, routed the garrison of Fort William, recovered Calcutta, stormed and sacked Hoogley. The Nabob, already disposed to make some concessions to the English, was confirmed in his pacific disposition by these proofs of their power and spirit. He accordingly made overtures to the chiefs of the invading armament, and offered to restore the factory, and to give compensation to those whom he had despoiled.

Clive's profession was war; and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Surajah Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee, chiefly composed of servants of the Company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts and compensated for their losses. The government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The promises of the Nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful; and Clive consented to treat, though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished.

With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier, carrying into effect, with eminent ability and valour, the plans of others. Henceforth he is to be chiefly regarded as a statesman; and his military movements are to be considered as subordinate to

his political designs. That in his new capacity he displayed great ability, and obtained great success is unquestionable. But it is also unquestionable that the transactions in which he now began to take a part have left a stain on his moral character.

We can by no means agree with Sir John Malcolm, who is obstinately resolved to see nothing but honour and integrity in the conduct of his hero. But we can as little agree with Mr. Mill, who has gone so far as to say that Clive was a man "to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang." Clive seems to us to have been constitutionally the very opposite of a knave, bold even to temerity, sincere even to indiscretion, hearty in friendship, open in enmity. Neither in his private life, nor in those parts of his public life in which he had to do with his countrymen, do we find any signs of a propensity to cunning. On the contrary, in all the disputes in which he was engaged as an Englishman against Englishmen, from his boxing-matches at school to those stormy altercations at the India House and in Parliament amidst which his later years were passed, his very faults were those of a high and magnanimous spirit. The truth seems to have been that he considered Oriental politics as a game in which nothing was unfair. He knew that the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honour, with men who would give any promise without hesitation and break any promise without shame, with men who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show that the great difference between Asiatic and European morality was constantly in his thoughts. He seems to have imagined, most erroneously in our opinion, that he could effect

nothing against such adversaries, if he was content to be bound by ties from which they were free, if he went on telling truth, and hearing none, if he fulfilled, to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept an engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly this man, in the other parts of his life an honourable English gentleman and soldier, was no sooner matched against an Indian intriguer, than he became himself an Indian intriguer, and descended, without scruple, to falsehood, to hypocritical caresses, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands.

The negotiations between the English and the Nabob were carried on chiefly by two agents, Mr. Watts, a servant of the Company, and a Bengalee of the name of Omichund. This Omichund had been one of the wealthiest native merchants resident at Calcutta, and had sustained great losses in consequence of the Nabob's expedition against that place. In the course of his commercial transactions, he had seen much of the English and was peculiarly qualified to serve as a medium of communication between them and a native court. He possessed great influence with his own race, and had in large measure the Hindoo talents, quick observation, tact, dexterity, perseverance, and the Hindoo vices, servility, greediness, and treachery.

The Nabob behaved with all the faithlessness of an Indian statesman, and with all the levity of a boy whose mind had been enfeebled by power and self-indulgence. He promised, retracted, hesitated, evaded. At one time he advanced with his army in a threatening manner towards Calcutta; but when he saw the resolute front which the English presented, he fell back in alarm, and consented to make peace with them on their own terms. The treaty was no sooner concluded than he formed new designs against them.

He intrigued with the French authorities at Chandernagore. He invited Bussy to march from the Deccan to the Hoogley, and to drive the English out of Bengal. All this was well known to Clive and Watson. They determined accordingly to strike a decisive blow and to attack Chandernagore, before the force there could be strengthened by new arrivals, either from the south of India or from Europe. Watson directed the expedition by water, Clive by land. The success of the combined movements was rapid and complete. The fort, the garrison, the artillery, the military stores, all fell into the hands of the English. Near five hundred European troops were among the prisoners.

The Nabob had feared and hated the English, even while he was still able to oppose to them their French rivals. The French were now vanquished; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed. The next day he sent a present of jewels to Bussy, exhorting that distinguished officer to hasten to protect Bengal "against Clive, the daring in war, on whom," says his Highness, "may all bad fortune attend." He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and threatened to impale him. He again sent for Watts, and begged pardon for the insult. In the meantime, his wretched maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company, had disgusted all classes of his subjects, soldiers, traders, civil functionaries, the proud and ostentatious Mahommedans, the timid,

supple, and parsimonious Hindoos. A formidable confederacy was formed against him, in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance, Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of the troops, and Jugget Seit, the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malcontents at Moorshedabad and the Committee at Calcutta.

In the committee there was much hesitation; but Clive's voice was given in favour of the conspirators, and his vigour and firmness bore down all opposition. It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Surajah Dowlah, and to place Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. In return, Meer Jaffier promised ample compensation to the Company and its servants, and a liberal donative to the army, the navy, and the committee. The odious vices of Surajah Dowlah, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which our trade must have been exposed had he continued to reign, appear to us fully to justify the resolution of deposing him. But nothing can justify the dissimulation which Clive stooped to practise. He wrote to Surajah Dowlah in terms so affectionate that they for a time lulled that weak prince into perfect security. The same courier who carried this "soothing letter," as Clive calls it, to the Nabob, carried to Mr. Watts a letter in the following terms: "Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing. I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left."

It was impossible that a plot which had so many ramifications should long remain entirely concealed. Enough reached the ears of the Nabob to arouse his suspicions. But he was soon quieted by the fictions and artifices which the inventive genius of Omichund

produced with miraculous readiness. All was going well; the plot was nearly ripe; when Clive learned that Omichund was likely to play false. The artful Bengalee had been promised a liberal compensation for all that he had lost at Calcutta. But this would not satisfy him. His services had been great. He held the thread of the whole intrigue. By one word breathed in the ear of Surajah Dowlah, he could undo all that he had done. The lives of Watts, of Meer Jaffier, of all the conspirators, were at his mercy; and he determined to take advantage of his situation and to make his own terms. He demanded three hundred thousand pounds sterling as the price of his secrecy and of his assistance. The committee, incensed by the treachery and appalled by the danger, knew not what course to take. But Clive was more than Omichund's match in Omichund's own arts. The man, he said, was a villain. Any artifice which would defeat such knavery was justifiable. The best course would be to promise what was asked. Omichund would soon be at their mercy; and then they might punish him by withholding from him, not only the bribe which he now demanded, but also the compensation which all the other sufferers of Calcutta were to receive.

His advice was taken. But how was this wary and sagacious Hindoo to be deceived? He had demanded that an article touching his claims should be inserted in the treaty between Meer Jaffier and the English, and he would not be satisfied unless he saw it with his own eyes. Clive had an expedient ready. Two treaties were drawn up, one on white paper, the other on red, the former real, the latter fictitious. In the former Omichund's name was not mentioned; the latter, which was to be shown to him, contained a stipulation in his favour.

But another difficulty arose. Admiral Watson

had scruples about signing the red treaty. Omichund's vigilance and acuteness were such that the absence of so important a name would probably awaken his suspicions. But Clive was not a man to do any thing by halves. We almost blush to write it. He forged Admiral Watson's name.

All was now ready for action. Mr. Watts fled secretly from Moorshedabad. Clive put his troops in motion, and wrote to the Nabob in a tone very different from that of his previous letters. He set forth all the wrongs which the British had suffered, offered to submit the points in dispute to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier, and concluded by announcing that, as the rains were about to set in, he and his men would do themselves the honour of waiting on his Highness for an answer.

Surajah Dowlah instantly assembled his whole force, and marched to encounter the English. It had been agreed that Meer Jaffier should separate himself from the Nabob, and carry over his division to Clive. But, as the decisive moment approached, the fears of the conspirator overpowered his ambition. Clive had advanced to Cossimbuzar; the Nabob lay with a mighty power a few miles off at Plassey; and still Meer Jaffier delayed to fulfil his engagements, and returned evasive answers to the earnest remonstrances of the English general.

Clive was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate: and, whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valour and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times as numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his daunt-

less spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting; and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards, he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that, if he had taken the advice of that council, the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put every thing to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed; and, at the close of a toilsome day's march, the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in a grove of mango-trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep; he heard, through the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk, when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize, he was in a few hours to contend.

Nor was the rest of Surajah Dowlah more peaceful. His mind, at once weak and stormy, was distracted by wild and horrible apprehensions. Appalled by the greatness and nearness of the crisis, distrusting his captains, dreading every one who approached him, dreading to be left alone, he sat gloomily in his tent, haunted, a Greek poet would have said, by the furies of those who had cursed him with their last breath in the Black Hole.

The day broke, the day which was to decide the fate of India. At sunrise the army of the Nabob, pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay.

Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn, not from the effeminate population of Bengal, but from the bolder race which inhabits the northern provinces; and the practised eye of Clive could perceive that both the men and the horses were more powerful than those of the Carnatic. The force which he had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English; and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. Conspicuous in the ranks of the little army were the men of the Thirty-ninth Regiment, which still bears on its colours, amidst many honourable additions won under Wellington in Spain and Gascony, the name of Plassey, and the proud motto, *Primus in Indis*.

The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely

routed. The little band of Frenchmen who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable waggons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of near sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But as soon as he saw that the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and, when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next morning he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. He gave evident signs of alarm when a guard was drawn out to receive him with the honours due to his rank. But his apprehensions were speedily removed. Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet camel could carry him, and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his counsellors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to

adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Meer Jaffier had arrived; and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and, accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

In a few days Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, escorted by two hundred English soldiers and three hundred sepoys. For his residence had been assigned a palace, which was surrounded by a garden so spacious that all the troops who accompanied him could conveniently encamp within it. The ceremony of the installation of Meer Jaffier was instantly performed. Clive led the new Nabob to the seat of honour, placed him on it, presented to him, after the immemorial fashion of the East, an offering of gold, and then, turning to the natives who filled the hall, congratulated them on the good fortune which had freed them from a tyrant. He was compelled on this occasion to use the services of an interpreter; for it is remarkable that, long as he resided in India, intimately acquainted as he was with Indian politics and with the Indian character, and adored as he was by his Indian soldiery, he never learned to express himself with facility in any Indian language. He is said indeed to have been sometimes under the necessity of employing, in his intercourse with natives of India, the smattering of Portuguese which he had acquired, when a lad in Brazil.

The new sovereign was now called upon to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with his allies. A conference was held at the house of Jugget Seit, the great banker, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements. Omichund came thither, fully believing himself to stand high in the favour

of Clive who, with dissimulation surpassing even the dissimulation of Bengal, had up to that day treated him with undiminished kindness. The white treaty was produced and read. Clive then turned to Mr. Scrafton, one of the servants of the Company, and said in English, "It is now time to undeceive Omichund." "Omichund," said Mr. Scrafton in Hindostanee, "the red treaty is a trick. You are to have nothing." Omichund fell back insensible into the arms of his attendants. He revived; but his mind was irreparably ruined. Clive, who, though little troubled by scruples of conscience in his dealings with Indian politicians, was not inhuman, seems to have been touched. He saw Omichund a few days later, spoke to him kindly, advised him to make a pilgrimage to one of the great temples of India in the hope that change of scene might restore his health, and was even disposed, notwithstanding all that had passed, again to employ him in the public service. But, from the moment of that sudden shock, the unhappy man sank gradually into idiocy. He, who had formerly been distinguished by the strength of his understanding and the simplicity of his habits, now squandered the remains of his fortune on childish trinkets, and loved to exhibit himself dressed in rich garments, and hung with precious stones. In this abject state he languished a few months, and then died.

We should not think it necessary to offer any remarks for the purpose of directing the judgment of our readers with respect to this transaction, had not Sir John Malcolm undertaken to defend it in all its parts. He regrets, indeed, that it was necessary to employ means so liable to abuse as forgery; but he will not admit that any blame attaches to those who deceived the deceiver. He thinks that the English were not bound to keep faith with one who kept

no faith with them, and that, if they had fulfilled their engagements with the wily Bengalee, so signal an example of successful treason would have produced a crowd of imitators. Now, we will not discuss this point on any rigid principles of morality. Indeed, it is quite unnecessary to do so: for, looking at the question as a question of expediency in the lowest sense of the word, and using no arguments but such as Machiavelli might have employed in his conferences with Borgia, we are convinced that Clive was altogether in the wrong, and that he committed, not merely a crime, but a blunder. That honesty is the best policy is a maxim which we firmly believe to be generally correct, even with respect to the temporal interest of individuals; but, with respect to societies, the rule is subject to still fewer exceptions, and that for this reason, that the life of societies is longer than the life of individuals. It is possible to mention men who have owed great worldly prosperity to breaches of private faith. But we doubt whether it be possible to mention a state which has on the whole been a gainer by a breach of public faith. The entire history of British India is an illustration of the great truth, that it is not prudent to oppose perfidy to perfidy, and that the most efficient weapon with which men can encounter falsehood is truth. During a long course of years, the English rulers of India, surrounded by allies and enemies whom no engagement could bind, have generally acted with sincerity and uprightness; and the event has proved that sincerity and uprightness are wisdom. English valour and English intelligence have done less to extend and to preserve our Oriental empire than English veracity. All that we could have gained by imitating the doublings, the evasions, the fictions, the perjuries which have been employed against us, is as nothing when

compared with what we have gained by being the one power in India on whose word reliance can be placed. No oath which superstition can devise, no hostage however precious, inspires a hundredth part of the confidence which is produced by the "yea, yea," and "nay, nay," of a British envoy. No fastness, however strong by art or nature, gives to its inmates a security like that enjoyed by the chief who, passing through the territories of powerful and deadly enemies, is armed with the British guarantee. The mightiest princes of the East can scarcely, by the offer of enormous usury, draw forth any portion of the wealth which is concealed under the hearths of their subjects. The British Government offers little more than four per cent.; and avarice hastens to bring forth tens of millions of rupees from its most secret repositories. A hostile monarch may promise mountains of gold to our sepoys, on condition that they will desert the standard of the Company. The Company promises only a moderate pension after a long service. But every sepoy knows that the promise of the Company will be kept; he knows that if he lives a hundred years his rice and salt are as secure as the salary of the Governor-General; and he knows that there is not another state in India which would not, in spite of the most solemn vows, leave him to die of hunger in a ditch as soon as he had ceased to be useful. The greatest advantage which a government can possess is to be the one trustworthy government in the midst of governments which nobody can trust. This advantage we enjoy in Asia. Had we acted during the last two generations on the principles which Sir John Malcolm appears to have considered as sound, had we, as often as we had to deal with people like Omichund, retaliated by lying and forging, and breaking faith, after their fashion, it

is our firm belief that no courage or capacity could have upheld our empire.

Sir John Malcolm admits that Clive's breach of faith could be justified only by the strongest necessity. As we think that breach of faith not only unnecessary, but most inexpedient, we need hardly say that we altogether condemn it.

Omichund was not the only victim of the revolution. Surajah Dowlah was taken a few days after his flight, and was brought before Meer Jaffier. There he flung himself on the ground in convulsions of fear, and with tears and loud cries implored the mercy which he had never shown. Meer Jaffier hesitated; but his son Meeran, a youth of seventeen, who in feebleness of brain and savageness of nature greatly resembled the wretched captive, was implacable. Surajah Dowlah was led into a secret chamber, to which in a short time the ministers of death were sent. In this act the English bore no part; and Meer Jaffier understood so much of their feelings, that he thought it necessary to apologise to them for having avenged them on their most malignant enemy.

The shower of wealth now fell copiously on the Company and its servants. A sum of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in coined silver, was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Fort William. The fleet which conveyed this treasure consisted of more than a hundred boats, and performed its triumphal voyage with flags flying and music playing. Calcutta, which a few months before had been desolate, was now more prosperous than ever. Trade revived; and the signs of affluence appeared in every English house. As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation. The treasury of Bengal was thrown open to him. There were piled up, after the usage of Indian princes, immense

masses of coin, among which might not seldom be detected the florins and byzants with which, before any European ship had turned the Cape of Good Hope, the Venetians purchased the stuffs and spices of the East. Clive walked between heaps of gold and silver, crowned with rubies and diamonds, and was at liberty to help himself. He accepted between two and three hundred thousand pounds.

The pecuniary transactions between Meer Jaffier and Clive were sixteen years later condemned by the public voice, and severely criticised in Parliament. They are vehemently defended by Sir John Malcolm. The accusers of the victorious general represented his gains as the wages of corruption, or as plunder extorted at the point of the sword from a helpless ally. The biographer, on the other hand, considers these great acquisitions as free gifts, honourable alike to the donor and to the receiver, and compares them to the rewards bestowed by foreign powers on Marlborough, on Nelson, and on Wellington. It had always, he says, been customary in the East to give and receive presents; and there was, as yet, no Act of Parliament positively prohibiting English functionaries in India from profiting by this Asiatic usage. This reasoning, we own, does not quite satisfy us. We do not suspect Clive of selling the interests of his employers or his country; but we cannot acquit him of having done what, if not in itself evil, was yet of evil example. Nothing is more clear than that a general ought to be the servant of his own government, and of no other. It follows that whatever rewards he receives for his services ought to be given either by his own government, or with the full knowledge and approbation of his own government. This rule ought to be strictly maintained even with respect to the merest bauble, with respect to a cross, a medal, or a yard of coloured riband. But

how can any government be well served, if those who command its forces are at liberty, without its permission, without its privity, to accept princely fortunes from its allies? It is idle to say that there was then no Act of Parliament prohibiting the practice of taking presents from Asiatic sovereigns. It is not on the Act which was passed at a later period for the purpose of preventing any such taking of presents, but on grounds which were valid before that Act was passed, on grounds of common law and common sense, that we arraign the conduct of Clive. There is no Act that we know of, prohibiting the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from being in the pay of continental powers. But it is not the less true that a Secretary who should receive a secret pension from France would grossly violate his duty, and would deserve severe punishment. Sir John Malcolm compares the conduct of Clive with that of the Duke of Wellington. Suppose—and we beg pardon for putting such a supposition even for the sake of argument—that the Duke of Wellington had, after the campaign of 1815, and while he commanded the army of occupation in France, privately accepted two hundred thousand pounds from Louis the Eighteenth, as a mark of gratitude for the great services which his Grace had rendered to the House of Bourbon; what would be thought of such a transaction? Yet the statute-book no more forbids the taking of presents in Europe now than it forbade the taking of presents in Asia then.

At the same time, it must be admitted that, in Clive's case, there were many extenuating circumstances. He considered himself as the general, not of the Crown, but of the Company. The Company had, by implication at least, authorised its agents to enrich themselves by means of the liberality of the native princes, and by other means still more objec-

tionable. It was hardly to be expected that the servant should entertain stricter notions of his duty than were entertained by his masters. Though Clive did not distinctly acquaint his employers with what had taken place, and request their sanction, he did not, on the other hand, by studied concealment, show that he was conscious of having done wrong. On the contrary, he avowed with the greatest openness that the Nabob's bounty had raised him to affluence. Lastly, though we think that he ought not in such a way to have taken any thing, we must admit that he deserves praise for having taken so little. He accepted twenty lacs of rupees. It would have cost him only a word to make the twenty forty. It was a very easy exercise of virtue to declaim in England against Clive's rapacity; but not one in a hundred of his accusers would have shown so much self-command in the treasury of Moorshedabad.

Meer Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which had placed him on it. He was not, indeed, a mere boy; nor had he been so unfortunate as to be born in the purple. He was not therefore quite so imbecile or quite so depraved as his predecessor had been. But he had none of the talents or virtues which his post required; and his son and heir, Meeran, was another Surajah Dowlah. The recent revolution had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new Nabob. The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government. While things were in this state a ship arrived with despatches which had been written at the India House before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The Directors had

determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner; and, to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honour, took on themselves the responsibility of disobeying these preposterous orders, and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented; and it soon appeared that the servants of the Company had only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The Directors, on receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their possessions in Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the south of India. Meer Jaffier regarded him with slavish awe. On one occasion, the Nabob spoke with severity to a native chief of high rank, whose followers had been engaged in a brawl with some of the Company's sepoys. "Are you yet to learn," he said, "who that Colonel Clive is, and in what station God has placed him?" The chief, who, as a famous jester and an old friend of Meer Jaffier, could venture to take liberties, answered, "I affront the Colonel! I, who never get up in the morning without making three low bows to his jackass!" This was hardly an exaggeration. Europeans and natives were alike at Clive's feet. The English regarded him as the only man who could force Meer Jaffier to keep his engagements with them. Meer Jaffier regarded him as the only man who could protect the new dynasty against turbulent subjects and encroaching neighbours.

It is but justice to say that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition against the tract lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this tract the French

still had the ascendency; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was entrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little known, but in whom the keen eye of the Governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.

While a considerable part of the army of Bengal was thus engaged at a distance, a new and formidable danger menaced the western frontier. The Great Mogul was a prisoner at Delhi in the hands of a subject. His eldest son, named Shah Alum, destined to be, during many years, the sport of adverse fortune, and to be a tool in the hands, first of the Mahrattas, and then of the English, had fled from the palace of his father. His birth was still revered in India. Some powerful princes, the Nabob of Oude in particular, were inclined to favour him. Shah Alum found it easy to draw to his standard great numbers of the military adventurers with whom every part of the country swarmed. An army of forty thousand men, of various races and religions, Mahrattas, Rohillas, Jauts, and Afghans, was speedily assembled round him; and he formed the design of overthrowing the upstart whom the English had elevated to a throne, and of establishing his own authority throughout Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

Meer Jaffier's terror was extreme; and the only expedient which occurred to him was to purchase, by the payment of a large sum of money, an accommodation with Shah Alum. This expedient had been repeatedly employed by those who, before him, had ruled the rich and unwarlike provinces near the mouth of the Ganges. But Clive treated the suggestion with a scorn worthy of his strong sense and dauntless courage. "If you do this," he wrote, "you will have the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many

more, come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you have none left in your treasury. I beg your Excellency will rely on the fidelity of the English, and of those troops which are attached to you." He wrote in a similar strain to the governor of Patna, a brave native soldier whom he highly esteemed. "Come to no terms; defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are stanch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

He kept his word. Shah Alum had invested Patna, and was on the point of proceeding to storm, when he learned that the Colonel was advancing by forced marches. The whole army which was approaching consisted of only four hundred and fifty Europeans, and two thousand five hundred sepoys. But Clive and his Englishmen were now objects of dread over all the East. As soon as his advanced guard appeared, the besiegers fled before him. A few French adventurers who were about the person of the prince advised him to try the chance of battle; but in vain. In a few days this great army, which had been regarded with so much uneasiness by the court of Moorshedabad, melted away before the mere terror of the British name.

The conqueror returned in triumph to Fort William. The joy of Meer Jaffier was as unbounded as his fears had been, and led him to bestow on his preserver a princely token of gratitude. The quit-rent which the East India Company were bound to pay to the Nabob for the extensive lands held by them to the south of Calcutta amounted to near thirty thousand pounds sterling a year. The whole of this splendid estate, sufficient to support with dignity the highest rank of the British peerage, was now conferred on Clive for life.

This present we think Clive justified in accepting. It was a present which, from its very nature, could be no secret. In fact, the Company itself was his tenant, and, by its acquiescence, signified its approbation of Meer Jaffier's grant.

But the gratitude of Meer Jaffier did not last long. He had for some time felt that the powerful ally who had set him up might pull him down, and had been looking round for support against the formidable strength by which he had himself been hitherto supported. He knew that it would be impossible to find among the natives of India any force which would look the Colonel's little army in the face. The French power in Bengal was extinct. But the fame of the Dutch had anciently been great in the Eastern seas; and it was not yet distinctly known in Asia how much the power of Holland had declined in Europe. Secret communications passed between the court of Moorshedabad and the Dutch factory at Chinsurah; and urgent letters were sent from Chinsurah, exhorting the government of Batavia to fit out an expedition which might balance the power of the English in Bengal. The authorities of Batavia, eager to extend the influence of their country, and still more eager to obtain for themselves a share of the wealth which had recently raised so many English adventurers to opulence, equipped a powerful armament. Seven large ships from Java arrived unexpectedly in the Hoogley. The military force on board amounted to fifteen hundred men, of whom about one half were European. The enterprise was well timed. Clive had sent such large detachments to oppose the French in the Carnatic that his army was now inferior in number to that of the Dutch. He knew that Meer Jaffier secretly favoured the invaders. He knew that he took on himself a serious responsibility if he attacked the forces of a friendly

power; that the English ministers could not wish to see a war with Holland added to that in which they were already engaged with France; that they might disavow his acts; that they might punish him. He had recently remitted a great part of his fortune to Europe, through the Dutch East India Company; and he had therefore a strong interest in avoiding any quarrel. But he was satisfied that, if he suffered the Batavian armament to pass up the river and to join the garrison of Chinsurah, Meer Jaffier would throw himself into the arms of these new allies, and that the English ascendency in Bengal would be exposed to most serious danger. He took his resolution with characteristic boldness, and was most ably seconded by his officers, particularly by Colonel Forde, to whom the most important part of the operations was entrusted. The Dutch attempted to force a passage. The English encountered them both by land and water. On both elements the enemy had a great superiority of force. On both they were signally defeated. Their ships were taken. Their troops were put to a total rout. Almost all the European soldiers who constituted the main strength of the invading army, were killed or taken. The conquerors sat down before Chinsurah; and the chiefs of that settlement, now thoroughly humbled, consented to the terms which Clive dictated. They engaged to build no fortifications, and to raise no troops beyond a small force necessary for the police of their factories; and it was distinctly provided that any violation of these covenants should be punished with instant expulsion from Bengal.

Three months after this great victory, Clive sailed for England. At home, honours and rewards awaited him, not indeed equal to his claims or to his ambition, but still such as, when his age, his rank in the

army, and his original place in society are considered, must be pronounced rare and splendid. He was raised to the Irish peerage, and encouraged to expect an English title. George the Third, who had just ascended the throne, received him with great distinction. The ministers paid him marked attention; and Pitt, whose influence in the House of Commons and in the country was unbounded, was eager to mark his regard for one whose exploits had contributed so much to the lustre of that memorable period. The great orator had already in Parliament described Clive as a heaven-born general, as a man who, bred to the labour of the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the King of Prussia. There were then no reporters in the gallery; but these words, emphatically spoken by the first statesman of the age, had passed from mouth to mouth, had been transmitted to Clive in Bengal, and had greatly delighted and flattered him. Indeed, since the death of Wolfe, Clive was the only English general of whom his countrymen had much reason to be proud. The Duke of Cumberland had been generally unfortunate; and his single victory, having been gained over his countrymen, and used with merciless severity, had been more fatal to his popularity than his many defeats. Conway, versed in the learning of his profession, and personally courageous, wanted vigour and capacity. Granby, honest, generous, and as brave as a lion, had neither science nor genius. Sackville, inferior in knowledge and abilities to none of his contemporaries, had incurred, unjustly as we believe, the imputation most fatal to the character of a soldier. It was under the command of a foreign general that the British had triumphed at Minden and Warburg. The people therefore, as was natural, greeted with pride and delight a captain of their own, whose native courage

and self-taught skill had placed him on a level with the great tacticians of Germany.

The wealth of Clive was such as enabled him to vie with the first grandees of England. There remains proof that he had remitted more than a hundred and eighty thousand pounds through the Dutch East India Company, and more than forty thousand pounds through the English Company. The amount which he had sent home through private houses was also considerable. He had invested great sums in jewels, then a very common mode of remittance from India. His purchases of diamonds, at Madras alone, amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds. Besides a great mass of ready money, he had his Indian estate, valued by himself at twenty-seven thousand a year. His whole annual income, in the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, who is desirous to state it as low as possible, exceeded forty thousand pounds; and incomes of forty thousand pounds at the time of the accession of George the Third were at least as rare as incomes of a hundred thousand pounds now. We may safely affirm that no Englishman who started with nothing has ever, in any line of life, created such a fortune at the early age of thirty-four.

It would be unjust not to add that Clive made a creditable use of his riches. As soon as the battle of Plassey had laid the foundation of his fortune, he sent ten thousand pounds to his sisters, bestowed as much more on other poor friends and relations, ordered his agent to pay eight hundred a year to his parents, and to insist that they should keep a carriage, and settled five hundred a year on his old commander Lawrence, whose means were very slender. The whole sum which Clive expended in this manner may be calculated at fifty thousand pounds.

He now set himself to cultivate parliamentary interest. His purchases of land seem to have been made in a great measure with that view, and, after the general election of 1761, he found himself in the House of Commons, at the head of a body of dependents whose support must have been important to any administration. In English politics, however, he did not take a prominent part. His first attachments, as we have seen, were to Mr. Fox; at a later period he was attracted by the genius and success of Mr. Pitt; but finally he connected himself in the closest manner with George Grenville. Early in the session of 1764, when the illegal and impolitic persecution of that worthless demagogue Wilkes had strongly excited the public mind, the town was amused by an anecdote, which we have seen in some unpublished memoirs of Horace Walpole. Old Mr. Richard Clive, who, since his son's elevation, had been introduced into society for which his former habits had not well fitted him, presented himself at the levee. The King asked him where Lord Clive was. "He will be in town very soon," said the old gentleman, loud enough to be heard by the whole circle, "and then your Majesty will have another vote."

But in truth all Clive's views were directed towards the country in which he had so eminently distinguished himself as a soldier and a statesman; and it was by considerations relating to India that his conduct as a public man in England was regulated. The power of the Company, though an anomaly, is in our time, we are firmly persuaded, a beneficial anomaly. In the time of Clive, it was not merely an anomaly, but a nuisance. There was no Board of Control. The Directors were for the most part mere traders, ignorant of general politics, ignorant of the peculiarities of the empire which

had strangely become subject to them. The Court of Proprietors, wherever it chose to interfere, was able to have its way. That court was more numerous, as well as more powerful than at present; for then every share of five hundred pounds conferred a vote. The meetings were large, stormy, even riotous, the debates indecently virulent. All the turbulence of a Westminster election, all the trickery and corruption of a Grampound election, disgraced the proceedings of this assembly on questions of the most solemn importance. Fictitious votes were manufactured on a gigantic scale. Clive himself laid out a hundred thousand pounds in the purchase of stock, which he then divided among nominal proprietors on whom he could depend, and whom he brought down in his train to every discussion and every ballot. Others did the same, though not to quite so enormous an extent.

The interest taken by the public of England in Indian questions was then far greater than at present, and the reason is obvious. At present a writer enters the service young; he climbs slowly; he is fortunate if, at forty-five, he can return to his country with an annuity of a thousand a year, and with savings amounting to thirty thousand pounds. A great quantity of wealth is made by English functionaries in India; but no single functionary makes a very large fortune, and what is made is slowly, hardly, and honestly earned. Only four or five high political offices are reserved for public men from England. The residencies, the secretaryships, the seats in the boards of revenue and in the Sudder courts, are all filled by men who have given the best years of life to the service of the Company; nor can any talents however splendid or any connexions however powerful obtain those lucrative posts for any person who has not entered by the regular door, and mounted by the

regular gradations. Seventy years ago, less money was brought home from the East than in our time. But it was divided among a very much smaller number of persons, and immense sums were often accumulated in a few months. Any Englishman, whatever his age might be, might hope to be one of the lucky emigrants. If he made a good speech in Leadenhall Street, or published a clever pamphlet in defence of the chairman, he might be sent out in the Company's service, and might return in three or four years as rich as Pigot or as Clive. Thus the India House was a lottery-office, which invited every body to take a chance, and held out ducal fortunes as the prizes destined for the lucky few. As soon as it was known that there was a part of the world where a lieutenant-colonel had one morning received as a present an estate as large as that of the Earl of Bath or the Marquess of Rockingham, and where it seemed that such a trifle as ten or twenty thousand pounds was to be had by any British functionary for the asking, society began to exhibit all the symptoms of the South Sea year, a feverish excitement, an ungovernable impatience to be rich, a contempt for slow, sure, and moderate gains.

At the head of the preponderating party in the India House, had long stood a powerful, able, and ambitious director of the name of Sulivan. He had conceived a strong jealousy of Clive, and remembered with bitterness the audacity with which the late governor of Bengal had repeatedly set at nought the authority of the distant Directors of the Company. An apparent reconciliation took place after Clive's arrival; but enmity remained deeply rooted in the hearts of both. The whole body of Directors was then chosen annually. At the election of 1763, Clive attempted to break down the power of the dominant faction. The contest was carried on with

a violence which he describes as tremendous. Sulivan was victorious, and hastened to take his revenge. The grant of rent which Clive had received from Meer Jaffier was, in the opinion of the best English lawyers, valid. It had been made by exactly the same authority from which the Company had received their chief possessions in Bengal, and the Company had long acquiesced in it. The Directors, however, most unjustly determined to confiscate it, and Clive was forced to file a bill in Chancery against them.

But a great and sudden turn in affairs was at hand. Every ship from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings. The internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a point that it could go no further. What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants exposed to temptation such that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, ill informed Company, situated at such a distance that the average interval between the sending of a despatch and the receipt of an answer was above a year and a half? Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul, who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators and flocks of camelopards, the Spanish viceroy, who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico or Lima, entered Madrid, with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter-horses trapped and shod with silver, were now outdone. Cruelty, indeed, properly

so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the Company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to be rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another Nabob, named Meer Cossim. But Meer Cossim had parts and a will; and, though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit, nay, which destroyed his revenue in the very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim, and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the Nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions, the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together in the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign, and who could unmake him. The servants of the Company obtained, not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly of almost the whole internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and to sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependents who ranged through the provinces, spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master; and his master was armed with all the power of the Company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the

Company thicker than the loins of Surajah Dowlah. Under their old masters they had at least one resource: when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilisation. It resembled the government of evil Genii, rather than the government of human tyrants. Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of English breed, the hereditary nobility of mankind, whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man, as their fathers had been used to fly from the Mahratta; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages and towns, which the report of his approach had made desolate.

The foreign lords of Bengal were naturally objects of hatred to all the neighbouring powers; and to all the haughty race presented a dauntless front. The English armies, every where outnumbered, were every where victorious. A succession of commanders, formed in the school of Clive, still maintained the fame of their country. "It must be acknowledged," says the Mussulman historian of those times, "that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery, are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array and fighting in order. If to so many military qualifications they knew how to join the arts of government, if they exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving the people of God, as they do in whatever concerns

their military affairs, no nation in the world would be preferable to them, or worthier of command. But the people under their dominion groan every where, and are reduced to poverty and distress. Oh God! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions which they suffer."

It was impossible, however, that even the military establishment should long continue exempt from the vices which pervaded every other part of the government. Rapacity, luxury, and the spirit of insubordination spread from the civil service to the officers of the army, and from the officers to the soldiers. The evil continued to grow till every mess-room became the seat of conspiracy and cabal, and till the sepoys could be kept in order only by wholesale executions.

At length the state of things in Bengal began to excite uneasiness at home. A succession of revolutions; a disorganised administration; the natives pillaged, yet the Company not enriched; every fleet bringing back fortunate adventurers who were able to purchase manors and to build stately dwellings, yet bringing back also alarming accounts of the financial prospects of the government; war on the frontiers; disaffection in the army; the national character disgraced by excesses resembling those of Verres and Pizarro; such was the spectacle which dismayed those who were conversant with Indian affairs. The general cry was that Clive, and Clive alone, could save the empire which he had founded.

This feeling manifested itself in the strongest manner at a very full General Court of Proprietors. Men of all parties, forgetting their feuds and trembling for their dividends, exclaimed that Clive was the man whom the crisis required, that the oppressive proceedings which had been adopted respecting his estate ought to be dropped, and that he ought to be entreated to return to India.

Clive rose. As to his estate, he said, he would make such propositions to the Directors as would, he trusted, lead to an amicable settlement. But there was a still greater difficulty. It was proper to tell them that he never would undertake the government of Bengal while his enemy Sulivan was chairman of the Company. The tumult was violent. Sulivan could scarcely obtain a hearing. An overwhelming majority of the assembly was on Clive's side. Sulivan wished to try the result of a ballot. But, according to the by-laws of the Company, there can be no ballot except on a requisition signed by nine proprietors; and, though hundreds were present, nine persons could not be found to set their hands to such a requisition.

Clive was in consequence nominated Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the British possessions in Bengal. But he adhered to his declaration, and refused to enter on his office till the event of the next election of Directors should be known. The contest was obstinate; but Clive triumphed. Sulivan, lately absolute master of the India House, was within a vote of losing his own seat; and both the chairman and the deputy-chairman were friends of the new governor.

Such were the circumstances under which Lord Clive sailed for the third and last time to India. In May, 1765, he reached Calcutta; and he found the whole machine of government even more fearfully disorganised than he had anticipated. Meer Jaffier, who had some time before lost his eldest son Meeran, had died while Clive was on his voyage out. The English functionaries at Calcutta had already received from home strict orders not to accept presents from the native princes. But, eager for gain, and unaccustomed to respect the commands of their distant, ignorant, and negligent masters, they again set

ROBERT, LORD CLIVE.
From the original painting by Nathaniel Dance, R.A., at Walcot,
the property of the Earl of Powis.

up the throne of Bengal to sale. About one hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling were distributed among nine of the most powerful servants of the Company; and, in consideration of this bribe, an infant son of the deceased Nabob was placed on the seat of his father. The news of the ignominious bargain met Clive on his arrival. In a private letter written immediately after his landing to an intimate friend, he poured out his feelings in language which, proceeding from a man so daring, so resolute, and so little given to theatrical display of sentiment, seems to us singularly touching. "Alas!" he says, "how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation—irrecoverably so, I fear. However, I do declare, by that great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable if there be a hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy these great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt."

The Council met, and Clive stated to them his full determination to make a thorough reform, and to use for that purpose the whole of the ample authority, civil and military, which had been confided to him. Johnstone, one of the boldest and worst men in the assembly, made some show of opposition. Clive interrupted him, and haughtily demanded whether he meant to question the power of the new government. Johnstone was cowed, and disclaimed any such intention. All the faces round the board grew long and pale; and not another syllable of dissent was uttered.

Clive redeemed his pledge. He remained in India about a year and a half; and in that short time effected one of the most extensive, difficult, and salutary reforms that ever was accomplished by any

statesman. This was the part of his life on which he afterwards looked back with most pride. He had it in his power to triple his already splendid fortune; to connive at abuses while pretending to remove them; to conciliate the good-will of all the English in Bengal, by giving up to their rapacity a helpless and timid race, who knew not where lay the island which sent forth their oppressors, and whose complaints had little chance of being heard across fifteen thousand miles of ocean. He knew that, if he applied himself in earnest to the work of reformation, he should raise every bad passion in arms against him. He knew how unscrupulous, how implacable, would be the hatred of those ravenous adventurers who, having counted on accumulating in a few months fortunes sufficient to support peerages, should find all their hopes frustrated. But he had chosen the good part; and he called up all the force of his mind for a battle far harder than that of Plassey. At first success seemed hopeless; but soon all obstacles began to bend before that iron courage and that vehement will. The receiving of presents from the natives was rigidly prohibited. The private trade of the servants of the Company was put down. The whole settlement seemed to be set, as one man, against these measures. But the inexorable governor declared that, if he could not find support at Fort William, he would procure it elsewhere, and sent for some civil servants from Madras to assist him in carrying on the administration. The most factious of his opponents he turned out of their offices. The rest submitted to what was inevitable; and in a very short time all resistance was quelled.

But Clive was far too wise a man not to see that the recent abuses were partly to be ascribed to a cause which could not fail to produce similar abuses,

as soon as the pressure of his strong hand was withdrawn. The Company had followed a mistaken policy with respect to the remuneration of its servants. The salaries were too low to afford even those indulgences which are necessary to the health and comfort of Europeans in a tropical climate. To lay by a rupee from such scanty pay was impossible. It could not be supposed that men of even average abilities would consent to pass the best years of life in exile, under a burning sun, for no other consideration than these stinted wages. It had accordingly been understood, from a very early period, that the Company's agents were at liberty to enrich themselves by their private trade. This practice had been seriously injurious to the commercial interests of the corporation. That very intelligent observer, Sir Thomas Roe, in the reign of James the First, strongly urged the Directors to apply a remedy to the abuse. "Absolutely prohibit the private trade," said he; "for your business will be better done. I know this is harsh. Men profess they come not for bare wages. But you will take away this plea if you give great wages to their content; and then you know what you part from."

In spite of this excellent advice, the Company adhered to the old system, paid low salaries, and connived at the indirect gains of the agents. The pay of a member of Council was only three hundred pounds a year. Yet it was notorious that such a functionary could not live in India for less than ten times that sum; and it could not be expected that he would be content to live even handsomely in India without laying up something against the time of his return to England. This system, before the conquest of Bengal, might affect the amount of the dividends payable to the proprietors, but could do little harm in any other way. But the Company was now a

ruling body. Its servants might still be called factors, junior merchants, senior merchants. But they were in truth proconsuls, proprætors, procurators of extensive regions. They had immense power. Their regular pay was universally admitted to be insufficient. They were, by the ancient usage of the service, and by the implied permission of their employers, warranted in enriching themselves by indirect means; and this had been the origin of the frightful oppression and corruption which had desolated Bengal. Clive saw clearly that it was absurd to give men power, and to require them to live in penury. He justly concluded that no reform could be effectual which should not be coupled with a plan for liberally remunerating the civil servants of the Company. The Directors, he knew, were not disposed to sanction any increase of the salaries out of their own treasury. The only course which remained open to the governor was one which exposed him to much misrepresentation, but which we think him fully justified in adopting. He appropriated to the support of the service the monopoly of salt, which has formed, down to our own time, a principal head of Indian revenue; and he divided the proceeds according to a scale which seems to have been not unreasonably fixed. He was in consequence accused by his enemies, and has been accused by historians, of disobeying his instructions, of violating his promises, of authorising that very abuse which it was his special mission to destroy, namely, the trade of the Company's servants. But every discerning and impartial judge will admit, that there was really nothing in common between the system which he set up and that which he was sent to destroy. The monopoly of salt had been a source of revenue to the governments of India before Clive was born. It continued to be so long after his death. The civil

servants were clearly entitled to a maintenance out of the revenue; and all that Clive did was to charge a particular portion of the revenue with their maintenance. He thus, while he put an end to the practices by which gigantic fortunes had been rapidly accumulated, gave to every British functionary employed in the East the means of slowly, but surely, acquiring a competence. Yet, such is the injustice of mankind that none of those acts which are the real stains of his life has drawn on him so much obloquy as this measure, which was in truth a reform necessary to the success of all his other reforms.

He had quelled the opposition of the civil service: that of the army was more formidable. Some of the retrenchments which had been ordered by the Directors affected the interests of the military service; and a storm arose, such as even Cæsar would not willingly have faced. It was no light thing to encounter the resistance of those who held the power of the sword, in a country governed only by the sword. Two hundred English officers engaged in a conspiracy against the government, and determined to resign their commissions on the same day, not doubting that Clive would grant any terms rather than see the army, on which alone the British empire in the East rested, left without commanders. They little knew the unconquerable spirit with which they had to deal. Clive had still a few officers round his person on whom he could rely. He sent to Fort St. George for a fresh supply. He gave commissions even to mercantile agents who were disposed to support him at this crisis; and he sent orders that every officer who resigned should be instantly brought up to Calcutta. The conspirators found that they had miscalculated. The governor was inexorable. The troops were steady. The sepoys, over whom Clive had always possessed extraordinary influence, stood by him with unshaken

fidelity. The leaders in the plot were arrested, tried, and cashiered. The rest, humbled and dispirited, begged to be permitted to withdraw their resignations. Many of them declared their repentance even with tears. The younger offenders Clive treated with lenity. To the ringleaders he was inflexibly severe; but his severity was pure from all taint of private malevolence. While he sternly upheld the just authority of his office, he passed by personal insults and injuries with magnanimous disdain. One of the conspirators was accused of having planned the assassination of the governor; but Clive would not listen to the charge. "The officers," he said, "are Englishmen, not assassins."

While he reformed the civil service and established his authority over the army, he was equally successful in his foreign policy. His landing on Indian ground was the signal for immediate peace. The Nabob of Oude, with a large army, lay at that time on the frontier of Bahar. He had been joined by many Afghans and Mahrattas, and there was no small reason to expect a general coalition of all the native powers against the English. But the name of Clive quelled in an instant all opposition. The enemy implored peace in the humblest language, and submitted to such terms as the new governor chose to dictate.

At the same time, the government of Bengal was placed on a new footing. The power of the English in that province had hitherto been altogether undefined. It was unknown to the ancient constitution of the empire, and it had been ascertained by no compact. It resembled the power which, in the last decrepitude of the Western Empire, was exercised over Italy by the great chiefs of foreign mercenaries, the Ricimers and the Odoacers, who put up and pulled down at their pleasure a succession of insignificant princes, dignified with the names of Cæsar and

Augustus. But as in Italy, so in India, the warlike strangers at length found it expedient to give to a domination which had been established by arms the sanction of law and ancient prescription. Theodoric thought it politic to obtain from the distant court of Byzantium a commission appointing him ruler of Italy; and Clive, in the same manner, applied to the Court of Delhi for a formal grant of the powers of which he already possessed the reality. The Mogul was absolutely helpless, and, though he murmured, had reason to be well pleased that the English were disposed to give solid rupees which he never could have extorted from them, in exchange for a few Persian characters which cost him nothing. A bargain was speedily struck; and the titular sovereign of Hindostan issued a warrant, empowering the Company to collect and administer the revenues of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

There was still a Nabob, who stood to the British authorities in the same relation in which the last drivelling Chilperics and Childerics of the Merovingian line stood to their able and vigorous Mayors of the Palace, to Charles Martel and to Pepin. At one time Clive had almost made up his mind to discard this phantom altogether; but he afterwards thought that it might be convenient still to use the name of the Nabob, particularly in dealings with other European nations. The French, the Dutch, and the Danes, would, he conceived, submit far more readily to the authority of the native Prince, whom they had always been accustomed to respect, than to that of a rival trading corporation. This policy may, at that time, have been judicious. But the pretence was soon found to be too flimsy to impose on any body; and it was altogether laid aside. The heir of Meer Jaffier still resides at Moorshedabad, the ancient capital of his house, still bears the title of Nabob, is still accosted by the English as "Your Highness," and is still suffered to retain a

portion of the regal state which surrounded his ancestors. A pension of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds a year is annually paid to him by the government. His carriage is surrounded by guards, and preceded by attendants with silver maces. His person and his dwelling are exempted from the ordinary authority of the ministers of justice. But he has not the smallest share of political power, and is, in fact, only a noble and wealthy subject of the Company.

It would have been easy for Clive, during his second administration in Bengal, to accumulate riches such as no subject in Europe possessed. He might indeed, without subjecting the rich inhabitants of the province to any pressure beyond that to which their mildest rulers had accustomed them, have received presents to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds a year. The neighbouring princes would gladly have paid any price for his favour. But he appears to have strictly adhered to the rules which he had laid down for the guidance of others. The Rajah of Benares offered him diamonds of great value. The Nabob of Oude pressed him to accept a large sum of money and a casket of costly jewels. Clive courteously, but peremptorily refused: and it should be observed that he made no merit of his refusal, and that the facts did not come to light till after his death. He kept an exact account of his salary, of his share of the profits accruing from the trade in salt, and of those presents which, according to the fashion of the East, it would be churlish to refuse. Out of the sum arising from these resources, he defrayed the expenses of his situation. The surplus he divided among a few attached friends who had accompanied him to India. He always boasted, and, as far as we can judge, he boasted with truth, that his last administration diminished instead of increasing his fortune.

One large sum indeed he accepted. Meer Jaffier

had left him by will above sixty thousand pounds sterling in specie and jewels: and the rules which had been recently laid down extended only to presents from the living, and did not affect legacies from the dead. Clive took the money, but not for himself. He made the whole over to the Company, in trust for officers and soldiers invalided in their service. The fund which still bears his name owes its origin to this princely donation.

After a stay of eighteen months, the state of his health made it necessary for him to return to Europe. At the close of January, 1767, he quitted for the last time the country on whose destinies he had exercised so mighty an influence.

His second return from Bengal was not, like his first, greeted by the acclamations of his countrymen. Numerous causes were already at work which embittered the remaining years of his life, and hurried him to an untimely grave. His old enemies at the India House were still powerful and active; and they had been reinforced by a large band of allies whose violence far exceeded their own. The whole crew of pilferers and oppressors from whom he had rescued Bengal persecuted him with the implacable rancour which belongs to such abject natures. Many of them even invested their property in India stock, merely that they might be better able to annoy the man whose firmness had set bounds to their rapacity. Lying newspapers were set up for no purpose but to abuse him; and the temper of the public mind was then such, that these arts, which under ordinary circumstances would have been ineffectual against truth and merit, produced an extraordinary impression.

The great events which had taken place in India had called into existence a new class of Englishmen, to whom their countrymen gave the name of Nabobs. These persons had generally sprung from families

neither ancient nor opulent; they had generally been sent at an early age to the East; and they had there acquired large fortunes, which they had brought back to their native land. It was natural that, not having had much opportunity of mixing with the best society, they should exhibit some of the awkwardness and some of the pomposity of upstarts. It was natural that, during their sojourn in Asia, they should have acquired some tastes and habits surprising, if not disgusting, to persons who never had quitted Europe. It was natural that, having enjoyed great consideration in the East, they should not be disposed to sink into obscurity at home; and as they had money, and had not birth or high connexion, it was natural that they should display a little obtrusively the single advantage which they possessed. Wherever they settled there was a kind of feud between them and the old nobility and gentry, similar to that which raged in France between the farmer-general and the marquess. This enmity to the aristocracy long continued to distinguish the servants of the Company. More than twenty years after the time of which we are now speaking, Burke pronounced that among the Jacobins might be reckoned "the East Indians almost to a man, who cannot bear to find that their present importance does not bear a proportion to their wealth."

The Nabobs soon became a most unpopular class of men. Some of them had in the East displayed eminent talents, and rendered great services to the state; but at home their talents were not shown to advantage, and their services were little known. That they had sprung from obscurity, that they had acquired great wealth, that they exhibited it insolently, that they spent it extravagantly, that they raised the price of every thing in their neighbourhood, from fresh eggs to rotten boroughs, that their liveries outshone those of dukes, that their coaches

were finer than that of the Lord Mayor, that the examples of their large and ill governed households corrupted half the servants in the country, that some of them, with all their magnificence, could not catch the tone of good society, but, in spite of the stud and the crowd of menials, of the plate and the Dresden china, of the venison and the Burgundy, were still low men; these were things which excited, both in the class from which they had sprung and in the class into which they attempted to force themselves, the bitter aversion which is the effect of mingled envy and contempt. But when it was also rumoured that the fortune which had enabled its possessor to eclipse the Lord Lieutenant on the race-ground, or to carry the county against the head of a house as old as Domesday Book, had been accumulated by violating public faith, by deposing legitimate princes, by reducing whole provinces to beggary, all the higher and better as well as all the low and evil parts of human nature were stirred against the wretch who had obtained by guilt and dishonour the riches which he now lavished with arrogant and inelegant profusion. The unfortunate Nabob seemed to be made up of those foibles against which comedy has pointed the most merciless ridicule, and of those crimes which have thrown the deepest gloom over tragedy, of Turcaret and Nero, of Monsieur Jourdain and Richard the Third. A tempest of execration and derision, such as can be compared only to that outbreak of public feeling against the Puritans which took place at the time of the Restoration, burst on the servants of the Company. The humane man was horror-struck at the way in which they had got their money, the thrifty man at the way in which they spent it. The Dilettante sneered at their want of taste. The Maccaroni black-balled them as vulgar fellows. Writers the most unlike in sentiment and

style, Methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons, were for once on the same side. It is hardly too much to say that, during a space of about thirty years, the whole lighter literature of England was coloured by the feelings which we have described. Foote brought on the stage an Anglo-Indian chief, dissolute, ungenerous, and tyrannical, ashamed of the humble friends of his youth, hating the aristocracy, yet childishly eager to be numbered among them, squandering his wealth on pandars and flatterers, tricking out his chairmen with the most costly hothouse flowers, and astounding the ignorant with jargon about rupees, lacs, and jaghires. Mackenzie, with more delicate humour, depicted a plain country family raised by the Indian acquisitions of one of its members to sudden opulence, and exciting derision by an awkward mimicry of the manners of the great. Cowper, in that lofty expostulation which glows with the very spirit of the Hebrew poets, placed the oppression of India foremost in the list of those national crimes for which God had punished England with years of disastrous war, with discomfiture in her own seas, and with the loss of her transatlantic empire. If any of our readers will take the trouble to search in the dusty recesses of circulating libraries for some novel published sixty years ago, the chance is that the villain or sub-villain of the story will prove to be a savage old Nabob, with an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver, and a worse heart.

Such, as far as we can now judge, was the feeling of the country respecting Nabobs in general. And Clive was eminently the Nabob, the ablest, the most celebrated, the highest in rank, the highest in fortune, of all the fraternity. His wealth was exhibited in a manner which could not fail to excite odium. He lived with great magnificence in Berkeley Square. He reared one palace in Shropshire and another at

Claremont. His parliamentary influence might vie with that of the greatest families. But in all this splendour and power envy found something to sneer at. On some of his relations wealth and dignity seem to have sat as awkwardly as on Mackenzie's Margery Mushroom. Nor was he himself, with all his great qualities, free from those weaknesses which the satirists of that age represented as characteristic of his whole class. In the field, indeed, his habits were remarkably simple. He was constantly on horseback, was never seen but in his uniform, never wore silk, never entered a palanquin, and was content with the plainest fare. But when he was no longer at the head of an army, he laid aside this Spartan temperance for the ostentatious luxury of a Sybarite. Though his person was ungraceful, and though his harsh features were redeemed from vulgar ugliness only by their stern, dauntless, and commanding expression, he was fond of rich and gay clothing, and replenished his wardrobe with absurd profusion. Sir John Malcolm gives us a letter worthy of Sir Matthew Mite, in which Clive orders "two hundred shirts, the best and finest that can be got for love or money." A few follies of this description, grossly exaggerated by report, produced an unfavourable impression on the public mind. But this was not the worst. Black stories, of which the greater part were pure inventions, were circulated touching his conduct in the East. He had to bear the whole odium, not only of those bad acts to which he had once or twice stooped, but of all the bad acts of all the English in India, of bad acts committed when he was absent, nay, of bad acts which he had manfully opposed and severely punished. The very abuses against which he had waged an honest, resolute, and successful war, were laid to his account. He was, in fact, regarded as the personification of all the vices and weaknesses

which the public, with or without reason, ascribed to the English adventurers in Asia. We have ourselves heard old men, who knew nothing of his history, but who still retained the prejudices conceived in their youth, talk of him as an incarnate fiend. Johnson always held this language. Brown, whom Clive employed to lay out his pleasure grounds, was amazed to see in the house of his noble employer a chest which had once been filled with gold from the treasury of Moorshedabad, and could not understand how the conscience of the criminal could suffer him to sleep with such an object so near to his bedchamber. The peasantry of Surrey looked with mysterious horror on the stately house which was rising at Claremont, and whispered that the great wicked lord had ordered the walls to be made so thick in order to keep out the devil, who would one day carry him away bodily. Among the gaping clowns who drank in this frightful story was a worthless ugly lad of the name of Hunt, since widely known as William Huntington, S.S.; and the superstition which was strangely mingled with the knavery of that remarkable impostor seems to have derived no small nutriment from the tales which he heard of the life and character of Clive.

In the meantime, the impulse which Clive had given to the administration of Bengal was constantly becoming fainter and fainter. His policy was to a great extent abandoned; the abuses which he had suppressed began to revive; and at length the evils which a bad government had engendered were aggravated by one of those fearful visitations which the best government cannot avert. In the summer of 1770, the rains failed; the earth was parched up; the tanks were empty; the rivers shrank within their beds; and a famine, such as is known only in countries where every household depends for support on

its own little patch of cultivation, filled the whole valley of the Ganges with misery and death. Tender and delicate women, whose veils had never been lifted before the public gaze, came forth from the inner chambers in which Eastern jealousy had kept watch over their beauty, threw themselves on the earth before the passers-by, and, with loud wailings, implored a handful of rice for their children. The Hoogley every day rolled down thousands of corpses close to the porticoes and gardens of the English conquerors. The very streets of Calcutta were blocked up by the dying and the dead. The lean and feeble survivors had not energy enough to bear the bodies of their kindred to the funeral pile or to the holy river, or even to scare away the jackals and vultures, who fed on human remains in the face of day. The extent of the mortality was never ascertained; but it was popularly reckoned by millions. This melancholy intelligence added to the excitement which already prevailed in England on Indian subjects. The proprietors of East India stock were uneasy about their dividends. All men of common humanity were touched by the calamities of our unhappy subjects; and indignation soon began to mingle itself with pity. It was rumoured that the Company's servants had created the famine by engrossing all the rice of the country; that they had sold grain for eight, ten, twelve times the price at which they had bought it; that one English functionary who, the year before, was not worth a hundred guineas, had, during that season of misery, remitted sixty thousand pounds to London. These charges we believe to have been unfounded. That servants of the Company had ventured, since Clive's departure, to deal in rice, is probable. That, if they dealt in rice, they must have gained by the scarcity, is certain. But there is no reason for thinking that they

either produced or aggravated an evil which physical causes sufficiently explain. The outcry which was raised against them on this occasion was, we suspect, as absurd as the imputations which, in times of dearth at home, were once thrown by statesmen and judges, and are still thrown by two or three old women, on the corn factors. It was, however, so loud and so general that it appears to have imposed even on an intellect raised so high above vulgar prejudices as that of Adam Smith. What was still more extraordinary, these unhappy events greatly increased the unpopularity of Lord Clive. He had been some years in England when the famine took place. None of his acts had the smallest tendency to produce such a calamity. If the servants of the Company had traded in rice, they had done so in direct contravention of the rule which he had laid down, and, while in power, had resolutely enforced. But, in the eyes of his countrymen, he was, as we have said, the Nabob, the Anglo-Indian character personified; and, while he was building and planting in Surrey, he was held responsible for all the effects of a dry season in Bengal.

Parliament had hitherto bestowed very little attention on our Eastern possessions. Since the death of George the Second, a rapid succession of weak administrations, each of which was in turn flattered and betrayed by the Court, had held the semblance of power. Intrigues in the palace, riots in the capital, and insurrectionary movements in the American colonies, had left the advisers of the Crown little leisure to study Indian politics. When they did interfere, their interference was feeble and irresolute. Lord Chatham, indeed, during the short period of his ascendency in the councils of George the Third, had meditated a bold attack on the Company. But his plans were rendered abortive by the strange malady

which about that time began to overcloud his splendid genius.

At length, in 1772, it was generally felt that Parliament could no longer neglect the affairs of India. The Government was stronger than any which had held power since the breach between Mr. Pitt and the great Whig connexion in 1761. No pressing question of domestic or European policy required the attention of public men. There was a short and delusive lull between two tempests. The excitement produced by the Middlesex election was over; the discontents of America did not yet threaten civil war; the financial difficulties of the Company brought on a crisis; the Ministers were forced to take up the subject; and the whole storm, which had long been gathering, now broke at once on the head of Clive.

His situation was indeed singularly unfortunate. He was hated throughout the country, hated at the India House, hated, above all, by those wealthy and powerful servants of the Company, whose rapacity and tyranny he had withstood. He had to bear the double odium of his bad and of his good actions, of every Indian abuse and of every Indian reform. The state of the political world was such that he could count on the support of no powerful connexion. The party to which he had belonged, that of George Grenville, had been hostile to the Government, and yet had never cordially united with the other sections of the Opposition, with the little band which still followed the fortunes of Lord Chatham, or with the large and respectable body of which Lord Rockingham was the acknowledged leader. George Grenville was now dead: his followers were scattered; and Clive, unconnected with any of the powerful factions which divided the Parliament, could reckon only on the votes of those members who were returned by

himself. His enemies, particularly those who were the enemies of his virtues, were unscrupulous, ferocious, implacable. Their malevolence aimed at nothing less than the utter ruin of his fame and fortune. They wished to see him expelled from Parliament, to see his spurs chopped off, to see his estate confiscated; and it may be doubted whether even such a result as this would have quenched their thirst for revenge.

Clive's parliamentary tactics resembled his military tactics. Deserted, surrounded, outnumbered, and with every thing at stake, he did not even deign to stand on the defensive, but pushed boldly forward to the attack. At an early stage of the discussions on Indian affairs he rose, and in a long and elaborate speech vindicated himself from a large part of the accusations which had been brought against him. He is said to have produced a great impression on his audience. Lord Chatham who, now the ghost of his former self, loved to haunt the scene of his glory, was that night under the gallery of the House of Commons, and declared that he had never heard a finer speech. It was subsequently printed under Clive's direction, and, when the fullest allowance has been made for the assistance which he may have obtained from literary friends, proves him to have possessed, not merely strong sense and a manly spirit, but talents both for disquisition and declamation which assiduous culture might have improved into the highest excellence. He confined his defence on this occasion to the measures of his last administration, and succeeded so far that his enemies thenceforth thought it expedient to direct their attacks chiefly against the earlier part of his life.

The earlier part of his life unfortunately presented some assailable points to their hostility. A committee was chosen by ballot to inquire into the affairs of India; and by this committee the whole history

of that great revolution which threw down Surajah Dowlah and raised Meer Jaffier was sifted with malignant care. Clive was subjected to the most unsparing examination and cross-examination, and afterwards bitterly complained that he, the Baron of Plassey, had been treated like a sheep-stealer. The boldness and ingenuousness of his replies would alone suffice to show how alien from his nature were the frauds to which, in the course of his Eastern negotiations, he had sometimes descended. He avowed the arts which he had employed to deceive Omichund, and resolutely said that he was not ashamed of them, and that, in the same circumstances, he would again act in the same manner. He admitted that he had received immense sums from Meer Jaffier; but he denied that, in doing so, he had violated any obligation of morality or honour. He laid claim, on the contrary, and not without some reason, to the praise of eminent disinterestedness. He described in vivid language the situation in which his victory had placed him; great princes dependent on his pleasure; an opulent city afraid of being given up to plunder; wealthy bankers bidding against each other for his smiles; vaults piled with gold and jewels thrown open to him alone. "By God, Mr. Chairman," he exclaimed, "at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation."

The inquiry was so extensive that the Houses rose before it had been completed. It was continued in the following session. When at length the committee had concluded its labours, enlightened and impartial men had little difficulty in making up their minds as to the result. It was clear that Clive had been guilty of some acts which it is impossible to vindicate without attacking the authority of all the most sacred laws which regulate the intercourse of individuals and of states. But it was equally clear

that he had displayed great talents, and even great virtues; that he had rendered eminent services both to his country and to the people of India; and that it was in truth not for his dealings with Meer Jaffier nor for the fraud which he had practised on Omichund, but for his determined resistance to avarice and tyranny, that he was now called in question.

Ordinary criminal justice knows nothing of set-off. The greatest desert cannot be pleaded in answer to a charge of the slightest transgression. If a man has sold beer on Sunday morning, it is no defence that he has saved the life of a fellow-creature at the risk of his own. If he has harnessed a Newfoundland dog to his little child's carriage, it is no defence that he was wounded at Waterloo. But it is not in this way that we ought to deal with men who, raised far above ordinary restraints, and tried by far more than ordinary temptations, are entitled to a more than ordinary measure of indulgence. Such men should be judged by their contemporaries as they will be judged by posterity. Their bad actions ought not, indeed, to be called good; but their good and bad actions ought to be fairly weighed; and, if on the whole the good preponderate, the sentence ought to be one, not merely of acquittal, but of approbation. Not a single great ruler in history can be absolved by a judge who fixes his eye inexorably on one or two unjustifiable acts. Bruce the deliverer of Scotland, Maurice the deliverer of Germany, William the deliverer of Holland, his great descendant the deliverer of England, Murray the good regent, Cosmo the father of his country, Henry the Fourth of France, Peter the Great of Russia, how would the best of them pass such a scrutiny? History takes wider views: and the best tribunal for great political cases is the tribunal which anticipates the verdict of history.

Reasonable and moderate men of all parties felt

this in Clive's case. They could not pronounce him blameless; but they were not disposed to abandon him to that low-minded and rancorous pack who had run him down and were eager to worry him to death. Lord North, though not very friendly to him, was not disposed to go to extremities against him. While the inquiry was still in progress, Clive, who had some years before been created a Knight of the Bath, was installed with great pomp in Henry the Seventh's chapel. He was soon after appointed Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire. When he kissed hands, George the Third, who had always been partial to him, admitted him to a private audience, talked to him half an hour on Indian politics, and was visibly affected when the persecuted general spoke of his services and of the way in which they had been requited.

At length the charges came in a definite form before the House of Commons. Burgoyne, chairman of the committee, a man of wit, fashion, and honour, an agreeable dramatic writer, an officer whose courage was never questioned and whose skill was at that time highly esteemed, appeared as the accuser. The members of the administration took different sides; for in that age all questions were open questions, except such as were brought forward by the Government, or such as implied some censure on the Government. Thurlow, the Attorney General, was among the assailants. Wedderburne, the Solicitor General, strongly attached to Clive, defended his friend with extraordinary force of argument and language. It is a curious circumstance that, some years later, Thurlow was the most conspicuous champion of Warren Hastings, while Wedderburne was among the most unrelenting persecutors of that great though not faultless statesman. Clive spoke in his own defence at less length and with less art than in the preceding

year, but with much energy and pathos. He recounted his great actions and his wrongs; and, after bidding his hearers remember that they were about to decide not only on his honour but on their own, he retired from the House.

The Commons resolved that acquisitions made by the arms of the State belong to the State alone, and that it is illegal in the servants of the State to appropriate such acquisitions to themselves. They resolved that this wholesome rule appeared to have been systematically violated by the English functionaries in Bengal. On a subsequent day they went a step farther, and resolved that Clive had, by means of the power which he possessed as commander of the British forces in India, obtained large sums from Meer Jaffier. Here the Commons stopped. They had voted the major and minor of Burgoyne's syllogism; but they shrank from drawing the logical conclusion. When it was moved that Lord Clive had abused his powers, and set an evil example to the servants of the public, the previous question was put and carried. At length, long after the sun had risen on an animated debate, Wedderburne moved that Lord Clive had at the same time rendered great and meritorious services to his country; and this motion passed without a division.

The result of this memorable inquiry appears to us, on the whole, honourable to the justice, moderation, and discernment of the Commons. They had indeed no great temptation to do wrong. They would have been very bad judges of an accusation brought against Jenkinson or against Wilkes. But the question respecting Clive was not a party question; and the House accordingly acted with the good sense and good feeling which may always be expected from an assembly of English gentlemen, not blinded by faction.

The equitable and temperate proceedings of the British Parliament were set off to the greatest advantage by a foil. The wretched government of Louis the Fifteenth had murdered, directly or indirectly, almost every Frenchman who had served his country with distinction in the east. Labourdonnais was flung into the Bastile, and, after years of suffering, left it only to die. Dupleix, stripped of his immense fortune, and broken-hearted by humiliating attendance in antechambers, sank into an obscure grave. Lally was dragged to the common place of execution with a gag between his lips. The Commons of England, on the other hand, treated their living captain with that discriminating justice which is seldom shown except to the dead. They laid down sound general principles; they delicately pointed out where he had deviated from those principles; and they tempered the gentle censure with liberal eulogy. The contrast struck Voltaire, always partial to England, and always eager to expose the abuses of the Parliaments of France. Indeed he seems, at this time, to have meditated a history of the conquest of Bengal. He mentioned his design to Dr. Moore when that amusing writer visited him at Ferney. Wedderburne took great interest in the matter, and pressed Clive to furnish materials. Had the plan been carried into execution, we have no doubt that Voltaire would have produced a book containing much lively and picturesque narrative, many just and humane sentiments poignantly expressed, many grotesque blunders, many sneers at the Mosaic chronology, much scandal about the Catholic missionaries, and much sublime theo-philanthropy, stolen from the New Testament, and put into the mouths of virtuous and philosophical Brahmins.

Clive was now secure in the enjoyment of his fortune and his honours. He was surrounded by

attached friends and relations; and he had not yet passed the season of vigorous bodily and mental exertion. But clouds had long been gathering over his mind, and now settled on it in thick darkness. From early youth he had been subject to fits of that strange melancholy "which rejoiceth exceedingly and is glad when it can find the grave." While still a writer at Madras, he had twice attempted to destroy himself. Business and prosperity had produced a salutary effect on his spirits. In India, while he was occupied by great affairs, in England, while wealth and rank had still the charm of novelty, he had borne up against his constitutional misery. But he had now nothing to do, and nothing to wish for. His active spirit in an inactive situation drooped and withered like a plant in an uncongenial air. The malignity with which his enemies had pursued him, the indignity with which he had been treated by the committee, the censure, lenient as it was, which the House of Commons had pronounced, the knowledge that he was regarded by a large portion of his countrymen as a cruel and perfidious tyrant, all concurred to irritate and depress him. In the meantime, his temper was tried by acute physical suffering. During his long residence in tropical climates, he had contracted several painful distempers. In order to obtain ease he called in the help of opium; and he was gradually enslaved by this treacherous ally. To the last, however, his genius occasionally flashed through the gloom. It was said that he would sometimes, after sitting silent and torpid for hours, rouse himself to the discussion of some great question, would display in full vigour all the talents of the soldier and the statesman, and would then sink back into his melancholy repose.

The disputes with America had now become so serious that an appeal to the sword seemed in-

evitable; and the Ministers were desirous to avail themselves of the services of Clive. Had he still been what he was when he raised the siege of Patna, and annihilated the Dutch army and navy at the mouth of the Ganges, it is not improbable that the resistance of the Colonists would have been put down, and that the inevitable separation would have been deferred for a few years. But it was too late. His strong mind was fast sinking under many kinds of suffering. On the twenty-second of November, 1774, he died by his own hand. He had just completed his forty-ninth year.

In the awful close of so much prosperity and glory, the vulgar saw only a confirmation of all their prejudices; and some men of real piety and genius so far forgot the maxims both of religion and of philosophy as confidently to ascribe the mournful event to the just vengeance of God, and to the horrors of an evil conscience. It is with very different feelings that we contemplate the spectacle of a great mind ruined by the weariness of satiety, by the pangs of wounded honour, by fatal diseases, and more fatal remedies.

Clive committed great faults; and we have not attempted to disguise them. But his faults, when weighed against his merits, and viewed in connexion with his temptations, do not appear to us to deprive him of his right to an honourable place in the estimation of posterity.

From his first visit to India dates the renown of the English arms in the East. Till he appeared, his countrymen were despised as mere pedlars, while the French were revered as a people formed for victory and command. His courage and capacity dissolved the charm. With the defence of Arcot commences that long series of Oriental triumphs which closes with the fall of Ghizni. Nor must we forget that he

was only twenty-five years old when he approved himself ripe for military command. This is a rare if not a singular distinction. It is true that Alexander, Condé, and Charles the Twelfth, won great battles at a still earlier age; but those princes were surrounded by veteran generals of distinguished skill, to whose suggestions must be attributed the victories of the Granicus, of Rocroi, and of Narva. Clive, an inexperienced youth, had yet more experience than any of those who served under him. He had to form himself, to form his officers, and to form his army. The only man, as far as we recollect, who at an equally early age ever gave equal proof of talents for war, was Napoleon Bonaparte.

From Clive's second visit to India dates the political ascendency of the English in that country. His dexterity and resolution realised, in the course of a few months, more than all the gorgeous visions which had floated before the imagination of Dupleix. Such an extent of cultivated territory, such an amount of revenue, such a multitude of subjects, was never added to the dominion of Rome by the most successful proconsul. Nor were such wealthy spoils ever borne under arches of triumph, down the Sacred Way, and through the crowded Forum, to the threshold of Tarpeian Jove. The fame of those who subdued Antiochus and Tigranes grows dim when compared with the splendour of the exploits which the young English adventurer achieved at the head of an army not equal in numbers to one half of a Roman legion. From Clive's third visit to India dates the purity of the administration of our Eastern empire. When he landed in Calcutta in 1765, Bengal was regarded as a place to which Englishmen were sent only to get rich, by any means, in the shortest possible time. He first made dauntless and unsparing war on that gigantic system of oppression,

extortion, and corruption. In that war he manfully put to hazard his ease, his fame, and his splendid fortune. The same sense of justice which forbids us to conceal or extenuate the faults of his earlier days compels us to admit that those faults were nobly repaired. If the reproach of the Company and of its servants has been taken away, if in India the yoke of foreign masters, elsewhere the heaviest of all yokes, has been found lighter than that of any native dynasty if to that gang of public robbers which formerly spread terror through the whole plain of Bengal has succeeded a body of functionaries not more highly distinguished by ability and diligence than by integrity, disinterestedness, and public spirit, if we now see such men as Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe, after leading victorious armies, after making and deposing kings, return, proud of their honourable poverty, from a land which once held out to every greedy factor the hope of boundless wealth, the praise is in no small measure due to Clive. His name stands high on the roll of conquerors. But it is found in a better list, in the list of those who have done and suffered much for the happiness of mankind. To the warrior, history will assign a place in the same rank with Lucullus and Trajan. Nor will she deny to the reformer a share of that veneration with which France cherishes the memory of Turgot, and with which the latest generations of Hindoos will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck.

VON RANKE. (OCTOBER, 1840.)

The Ecclesiastical and Political History of the Popes of Rome, during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. By LEOPOLD RANKE, Professor in the University of Berlin: Translated from the German, by SARAH AUSTIN. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1840.

IT is hardly necessary for us to say that this is an excellent book excellently translated. The original work of Professor Ranke is known and esteemed wherever German literature is studied, and has been found interesting even in a most inaccurate and dishonest French version. It is, indeed, the work of a mind fitted both for minute researches and for large speculations. It is written also in an admirable spirit, equally remote from levity and bigotry, serious and earnest, yet tolerant and impartial. It is, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that we now see this book take its place among the English classics. Of the translation we need only say that it is such as might be expected from the skill, the taste, and the scrupulous integrity of the accomplished lady who, as an interpreter between the mind of Germany and the mind of Britain, has already deserved so well of both countries.

The subject of this book has always appeared to us singularly interesting. How it was that Protestantism did so much, yet did no more, how it was that the Church of Rome, having lost a large part of Europe, not only ceased to lose, but actually regained

nearly half of what she had lost, is certainly a most curious and important question; and on this question Professor Ranke has thrown far more light than any other person who has written on it.

There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilisation. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers abounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated for what she has lost in the Old. Her spiritual ascendency extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn, countries which, a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that

which now inhabits Europe. The members of her communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions; and it will be difficult to show that all other Christian sects united amount to a hundred and twenty millions. Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.

We often hear it said that the world is constantly becoming more and more enlightened, and that this enlightening must be favourable to Protestantism, and unfavourable to Catholicism. We wish that we could think so. But we see great reason to doubt whether this be a well founded expectation. We see that during the last two hundred and fifty years the human mind has been in the highest degree active, that it has made great advances in every branch of natural philosophy, that it has produced innumerable inventions tending to promote the convenience of life, that medicine, surgery, chemistry, engineering, have been very greatly improved, that government, police, and law have been improved, though not to so great an extent as the physical sciences. Yet we see that, during these two hundred and fifty years, Protestantism has made no conquests worth speaking of. Nay, we believe that, as far as there has been

a change, that change has, on the whole, been in favour of the Church of Rome. We cannot, therefore, feel confident that the progress of knowledge will necessarily be fatal to a system which has, to say the least, stood its ground in spite of the immense progress made by the human race in knowledge since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Indeed the argument which we are considering, seems to us to be founded on an entire mistake. There are branches of knowledge with respect to which the law of the human mind is progress. In mathematics, when once a proposition has been demonstrated, it is never afterwards contested. Every fresh story is as solid a basis for a new superstructure as the original foundation was. Here, therefore, there is a constant addition to the stock of truth. In the inductive sciences again, the law is progress. Every day furnishes new facts, and thus brings theory nearer and nearer to perfection. There is no chance that, either in the purely demonstrative, or in the purely experimental sciences, the world will ever go back or even remain stationary. Nobody ever heard of a reaction against Taylor's theorem, or of a reaction against Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood.

But with theology the case is very different. As respects natural religion,—revelation being for the present altogether left out of the question,—it is not easy to see that a philosopher of the present day is more favourably situated than Thales or Simonides. He has before him just the same evidences of design in the structure of the universe which the early Greeks had. We say just the same; for the discoveries of modern astronomers and anatomists have really added nothing to the force of that argument which a reflecting mind finds in every beast, bird, insect, fish, leaf, flower, and shell. The reason-

ing by which Socrates, in Xenophon's hearing, confuted the little atheist Aristodemus, is exactly the reasoning of Paley's Natural Theology. Socrates makes precisely the same use of the statues of Polycletus and the pictures of Zeuxis which Paley makes of the watch. As to the other great question, the question, what becomes of man after death, we do not see that a highly educated European, left to his unassisted reason, is more likely to be in the right than a Blackfoot Indian. Not a single one of the many sciences in which we surpass the Blackfoot Indians throws the smallest light on the state of the soul after the animal life is extinct. In truth all the philosophers, ancient and modern, who have attempted, without the help of revelation, to prove the immortality of man, from Plato down to Franklin, appear to us to have failed deplorably.

Then, again, all the great enigmas which perplex the natural theologian are the same in all ages. The ingenuity of a people just emerging from barbarism is quite sufficient to propound those enigmas. The genius of Locke or Clarke is quite unable to solve them. It is a mistake to imagine that subtle speculations touching the divine attributes, the origin of evil, the necessity of human actions, the foundation of moral obligation, imply any high degree of intellectual culture. Such speculations, on the contrary, are in a peculiar manner the delight of intelligent children and of half civilised men. The number of boys is not small who, at fourteen, have thought enough on these questions to be fully entitled to the praise which Voltaire gives to Zadig. "Il en savait ce qu'on en a su dans tous les âges; c'est-à-dire, fort peu de chose." The book of Job shows that, long before letters and arts were known to Ionia, these vexing questions were debated with no common skill and eloquence, under the tents of the Idumean

Emirs; nor has human reason, in the course of three thousand years, discovered any satisfactory solution of the riddles which perplexed Eliphaz and Zophar.

Natural theology, then, is not a progressive science. That knowledge of our origin and of our destiny which we derive from revelation is indeed of very different clearness, and of very different importance. But neither is revealed religion of the nature of a progressive science. All Divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant Churches, recorded in certain books. It is equally open to all who, in any age, can read those books; nor can all the discoveries of all the philosophers in the world add a single verse to any of those books. It is plain, therefore, that in divinity there cannot be a progress analogous to that which is constantly taking place in pharmacy, geology, and navigation. A Christian of the fifth century with a Bible is neither better nor worse situated than a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible, candour and natural acuteness being, of course, supposed equal. It matters not at all that the compass, printing, gunpowder, steam, gas, vaccination, and a thousand other discoveries and inventions, which were unknown in the fifth century, are familiar to the nineteenth. None of these discoveries and inventions has the smallest bearing on the question whether man is justified by faith alone, or whether the invocation of saints is an orthodox practice. It seems to us, therefore, that we have no security for the future against the prevalence of any theological error that ever has prevailed in time past among Christian men. We are confident that the world will never go back to the solar system of Ptolemy; nor is our confidence in the least shaken by the circumstance, that even so great a man as Bacon rejected the theory of Galileo with scorn; for Bacon had not all the means of arriving at a sound

conclusion which are within our reach, and which secure people who would not have been worthy to mend his pens from falling into his mistakes. But when we reflect that Sir Thomas More was ready to die for the doctrine of transubstantiation, we cannot but feel some doubt whether the doctrine of transubstantiation may not triumph over all opposition. More was a man of eminent talents. He had all the information on the subject that we have, or that, while the world lasts, any human being will have. The text, "This is my body," was in his New Testament as it is in ours. The absurdity of the literal interpretation was as great and as obvious in the sixteenth century as it is now. No progress that science has made, or will make, can add to what seems to us the overwhelming force of the argument against the real presence. We are, therefore, unable to understand why what Sir Thomas More believed respecting transubstantiation may not be believed to the end of time by men equal in abilities and honesty to Sir Thomas More. But Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue; and the doctrine of transubstantiation is a kind of proof charge. A faith which stands that test will stand any test. The prophecies of Brothers and the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe sink to trifles in the comparison.

One reservation, indeed, must be made. The books and traditions of a sect may contain, mingled with propositions strictly theological, other propositions, purporting to rest on the same authority, which relate to physics. If new discoveries should throw discredit on the physical propositions, the theological propositions, unless they can be separated from the physical propositions, will share in that discredit. In this way, undoubtedly, the progress of science may indirectly serve the cause of religious

truth. The Hindoo mythology, for example, is bound up with a most absurd geography. Every young Brahmin, therefore, who learns geography in our colleges, learns to smile at the Hindoo mythology. If Catholicism has not suffered to an equal degree from the Papal decision that the sun goes round the earth, this is because all intelligent Catholics now hold, with Pascal, that, in deciding the point at all, the Church exceeded her powers, and was, therefore, justly left destitute of that supernatural assistance which, in the exercise of her legitimate functions, the promise of her Founder authorised her to expect.

This reservation affects not at all the truth of our proposition, that divinity, properly so called, is not a progressive science. A very common knowledge of history, a very little observation of life, will suffice to prove that no learning, no sagacity, affords a security against the greatest errors on subjects relating to the invisible world. Bayle and Chillingworth, two of the most sceptical of mankind, turned Catholics from sincere conviction. Johnson, incredulous on all other points, was a ready believer in miracles and apparitions. He would not believe in Ossian; but he was willing to believe in the second sight. He would not believe in the earthquake of Lisbon; but he was willing to believe in the Cock Lane ghost.

For these reasons we have ceased to wonder at any vagaries of superstition. We have seen men, not of mean intellect or neglected education, but qualified by their talents and acquirements to attain eminence either in active or speculative pursuits, well read scholars, expert logicians, keen observers of life and manners, prophesying, interpreting, talking unknown tongues, working miraculous cures, coming down with messages from God to the House of Commons. We have seen an old woman, with no talents beyond the cunning of a fortune-teller, and with the education of a scullion,

exalted into a prophetess, and surrounded by tens of thousands of devoted followers, many of whom were, in station and knowledge, immeasurably her superiors; and all this in the nineteenth century; and all this in London. Yet why not? For of the dealings of God with man no more has been revealed to the nineteenth century than to the first, or to London than to the wildest parish in the Hebrides. It is true that, in those things which concern this life and this world, man constantly becomes wiser and wiser. But it is no less true that, as respects a higher power and a future state, man, in the language of Goethe's scoffing fiend,

"bleibt stets von gleichem Schlag,
Und ist so wunderlich als wie am ersten Tag.

The history of Catholicism strikingly illustrates these observations. During the last seven centuries the public mind of Europe has made constant progress in every department of secular knowledge. But in religion we can trace no constant progress. The ecclesiastical history of that long period is a history of movement to and fro. Four times, since the authority of the Church of Rome was established in Western Christendom, has the human intellect risen up against her yoke. Twice that Church remained completely victorious. Twice she came forth from the conflict bearing the marks of cruel wounds, but with the principle of life still strong within her. When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which she has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish.

The first of these insurrections broke out in the region where the beautiful language of *Oc* was spoken. That country, singularly favoured by nature, was, in the twelfth century, the most flourishing and civilised portion of Western Europe. It was in no wise a

part of France. It had a distinct political existence, a distinct national character, distinct usages, and a distinct speech. The soil was fruitful and well cultivated; and amidst the cornfields and vineyards rose many rich cities, each of which was a little republic, and many stately castles, each of which contained a miniature of an imperial court. It was there that the spirit of chivalry first laid aside its terrors, first took a humane and graceful form, first appeared as the inseparable associate of art and literature, of courtesy and love. The other vernacular dialects which, since the fifth century, had sprung up in the ancient provinces of the Roman empire, were still rude and imperfect. The sweet Tuscan, the rich and energetic English, were abandoned to artizans and shepherds. No clerk had ever condescended to use such barbarous jargon for the teaching of science, for the recording of great events, or for the painting of life and manners. But the language of Provence was already the language of the learned and polite, and was employed by numerous writers, studious of all the arts of composition and versification. A literature rich in ballads, in war-songs, in satire, and, above all, in amatory poetry, amused the leisure of the knights and ladies whose fortified mansions adorned the banks of the Rhone and Garonne. With civilisation had come freedom of thought. Use had taken away the horror with which misbelievers were elsewhere regarded. No Norman or Breton ever saw a Mussulman, except to give and receive blows on some Syrian field of battle. But the people of the rich countries which lay under the Pyrenees lived in habits of courteous and profitable intercourse with the Moorish kingdoms of Spain, and gave a hospitable welcome to skilful leeches and mathematicians who, in the schools of Cordova and Granada, had become versed in all the learning of the Arabians

The Greek, still preserving, in the midst of political degradation, the ready wit and the inquiring spirit of his fathers, still able to read the most perfect of human compositions, still speaking the most powerful and flexible of human languages, brought to the marts of Narbonne and Toulouse, together with the drugs and silks of remote climates, bold and subtle theories long unknown to the ignorant and credulous West. The Paulician theology, a theology in which, as it should seem, many of the doctrines of the modern Calvinists were mingled with some doctrines derived from the ancient Manichees, spread rapidly through Provence and Languedoc. The clergy of the Catholic Church were regarded with loathing and contempt. "Viler than a priest," "I would as soon be a priest," became proverbial expressions. The Papacy had lost all authority with all classes, from the great feudal princes down to the cultivators of the soil.

The danger to the hierarchy was indeed formidable. Only one transalpine nation had emerged from barbarism; and that nation had thrown off all respect for Rome. Only one of the vernacular languages of Europe had yet been extensively employed for literary purposes; and that language was a machine in the hands of heretics. The geographical position of the sectaries made the danger peculiarly formidable. They occupied a central region communicating directly with France, with Italy, and with Spain. The provinces which were still untainted were separated from each other by this infected district. Under these circumstances, it seemed probable that a single generation would suffice to spread the reformed doctrine to Lisbon, to London, and to Naples. But this was not to be. Rome cried for help to the warriors of northern France. She appealed at once to their superstition and to their cupidity. To the devout believer she promised pardons

as ample as those with which she had rewarded the deliverers of the Holy Sepulchre. To the rapacious and profligate she offered the plunder of fertile plains and wealthy cities. Unhappily, the ingenious and polished inhabitants of the Languedocian provinces were far better qualified to enrich and embellish their country than to defend it. Eminent in the arts of peace, unrivalled in the "gay science," elevated above many vulgar superstitions, they wanted that iron courage, and that skill in martial exercises, which distinguished the chivalry of the region beyond the Loire, and were ill fitted to face enemies who, in every country from Ireland to Palestine, had been victorious against tenfold odds. A war, distinguished even among wars of religion by merciless atrocity, destroyed the Albigensian heresy, and with that heresy the prosperity, the civilisation, the literature, the national existence, of what was once the most opulent and enlightened part of the great European family. Rome, in the meantime, warned by that fearful danger from which the exterminating swords of her crusaders had narrowly saved her, proceeded to revise and strengthen her whole system of polity. At this period were instituted the Order of Francis, the Order of Dominic, the Tribunal of the Inquisition. The new spiritual police was every where. No alley in a great city, no hamlet on a remote mountain, was unvisited by the begging friar. The simple Catholic, who was content to be no wiser than his fathers, found, wherever he turned, a friendly voice to encourage him. The path of the heretic was beset by innumerable spies; and the Church, lately in danger of utter subversion, now appeared to be impregnably fortified by the love, the reverence, and the terror of mankind.

A century and a half passed away; and then came the second great rising up of the human intellect

against the spiritual domination of Rome. During the two generations which followed the Albigensian crusade, the power of the Papacy had been at the height. Frederic the Second, the ablest and most accomplished of the long line of German Cæsars, had in vain exhausted all the resources of military and political skill in the attempt to defend the rights of the civil power against the encroachments of the Church. The vengeance of the priesthood had pursued his house to the third generation. Manfred had perished on the field of battle, Conradin on the scaffold. Then a turn took place. The secular authority, long unduly depressed, regained the ascendant with startling rapidity. The change is doubtless to be ascribed chiefly to the general disgust excited by the way in which the Church had abused its powers and its success. But something must be attributed to the character and situation of individuals. The man who bore the chief part in effecting this revolution was Philip the Fourth of France, surnamed the Beautiful, a despot by position, a despot by temperament, stern, implacable, and unscrupulous, equally prepared for violence and for chicanery, and surrounded by a devoted band of men of the sword and of men of law. The fiercest and most high-minded of the Roman Pontiffs, while bestowing kingdoms and citing great princes to his judgment-seat, was seized in his palace by armed men, and so foully outraged that he died mad with rage and terror. "Thus," sang the great Florentine poet, "was Christ, in the person of his vicar, a second time seized by ruffians, a second time mocked, a second time drenched with the vinegar and the gall." The seat of the Papal court was carried beyond the Alps, and the Bishops of Rome became dependents of France. Then came the great schism of the West. Two Popes, each with a doubtful title, made all

Europe ring with their mutual invectives and anathemas. Rome cried out against the corruptions of Avignon; and Avignon, with equal justice, recriminated on Rome. The plain Christian people, brought up in the belief that it was a sacred duty to be in communion with the head of the Church, were unable to discover, amidst conflicting testimonies and conflicting arguments, to which of the two worthless priests who were cursing and reviling each other the headship of the Church rightfully belonged. It was nearly at this juncture that the voice of John Wickliffe began to make itself heard. The public mind of England was soon stirred to its inmost depths; and the influence of the new doctrines was soon felt, even in the distant kingdom of Bohemia. In Bohemia, indeed, there had long been a predisposition to heresy. Merchants from the Lower Danube were often seen in the fairs of Prague; and the Lower Danube was peculiarly the seat of the Paulician theology. The Church, torn by schism, and fiercely assailed at once in England and in the German empire, was in a situation scarcely less perilous than at the crisis which preceded the Albigensian crusade.

But this danger also passed by. The civil power gave its strenuous support to the Church; and the Church made some show of reforming itself. The council of Constance put an end to the schism. The whole Catholic world was again united under a single chief; and rules were laid down which seemed to make it improbable that the power of that chief would be grossly abused. The most distinguished teachers of the new doctrine were slaughtered. The English government put down the Lollards with merciless rigour; and, in the next generation, scarcely one trace of the second great revolt against the Papacy could be found, except among the rude population of the mountains of Bohemia.

Another century went by; and then began the third and most memorable struggle for spiritual freedom. The times were changed. The great remains of Athenian and Roman genius were studied by thousands. The Church had no longer a monopoly of learning. The powers of the modern languages had at length been developed. The invention of printing had given new facilities to the intercourse of mind with mind. With such auspices commenced the great Reformation.

We will attempt to lay before our readers, in a short compass, what appears to us to be the real history of the contest which began with the preaching of Luther against the Indulgences, and which may, in one sense, be said to have been terminated, a hundred and thirty years later, by the treaty of Westphalia.

In the northern parts of Europe, the victory of Protestantism was rapid and decisive. The dominion of the Papacy was felt by the nations of Teutonic blood as the dominion of Italians, of foreigners, of men who were aliens in language, manners, and intellectual constitution. The large jurisdiction exercised by the spiritual tribunals of Rome seemed to be a degrading badge of servitude. The sums which, under a thousand pretexts, were exacted by a distant court, were regarded both as a humiliating and as a ruinous tribute. The character of that court excited the scorn and disgust of a grave, earnest, sincere, and devout people. The new theology spread with a rapidity never known before. All ranks, all varieties of character, joined the ranks of the innovators. Sovereigns impatient to appropriate to themselves the prerogatives of the Pope, nobles desirous to share the plunder of abbeys, suitors exasperated by the extortions of the Roman Camera, patriots impatient of a foreign rule, good men

scandalized by the corruptions of the Church, bad men desirous of the license inseparable from great moral revolutions, wise men eager in the pursuit of truth, weak men allured by the glitter of novelty, all were found on one side. Alone among the northern nations the Irish adhered to the ancient faith: and the cause of this seems to have been that the national feeling which, in happier countries, was directed against Rome, was in Ireland directed against England. Within fifty years from the day on which Luther publicly renounced communion with the Papacy, and burned the bull of Leo before the gates of Wittenberg, Protestantism attained its highest ascendency, an ascendency which it soon lost, and which it has never regained. Hundreds, who could well remember Brother Martin a devout Catholic, lived to see the revolution of which he was the chief author, victorious in half the states of Europe. In England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Livonia, Prussia, Saxony, Hesse, Wurtemburg, the Palatinate, in several cantons of Switzerland, in the Northern Netherlands, the Reformation had completely triumphed; and in all the other countries on this side of the Alps and the Pyrenees, it seemed on the point of triumphing.

But while this mighty work was proceeding in the north of Europe, a revolution of a very different kind had taken place in the south. The temper of Italy and Spain was widely different from that of Germany and England. As the national feeling of the Teutonic nations impelled them to throw off the Italian supremacy, so the national feeling of the Italians impelled them to resist any change which might deprive their country of the honours and advantages which she enjoyed as the seat of the government of the Universal Church. It was in Italy that the tributes were spent of which foreign nations so bitterly complained. It

was to adorn Italy that the traffic in Indulgences had been carried to that scandalous excess which had roused the indignation of Luther. There was among the Italians both much piety and much impiety; but, with very few exceptions, neither the piety nor the impiety took the turn of Protestantism. The religious Italians desired a reform of morals and discipline, but not a reform of doctrine, and least of all a schism. The irreligious Italians simply disbelieved Christianity, without hating it. They looked at it as artists or as statesmen; and, so looking at it, they liked it better in the established form than in any other. It was to them what the old Pagan worship was to Trajan and Pliny. Neither the spirit of Savonarola nor the spirit of Machiavelli had any thing in common with the spirit of the religious or political Protestants of the north.

Spain again was, with respect to the Catholic Church, in a situation very different from that of the Teutonic nations. Italy was, in truth, a part of the empire of Charles the Fifth; and the court of Rome was, on many important occasions, his tool. He had not, therefore, like the distant princes of the North, a strong selfish motive for attacking the Papacy. In fact, the very measures which provoked the Sovereign of England to renounce all connexion with Rome were dictated by the Sovereign of Spain. The feeling of the Spanish people concurred with the interest of the Spanish government. The attachment of the Castilian to the faith of his ancestors was peculiarly strong and ardent. With that faith were inseparably bound up the institutions, the independence, and the glory of his country. Between the day when the last Gothic King was vanquished on the banks of the Xeres, and the day when Ferdinand and Isabella entered Granada in triumph, near eight hundred years had elapsed; and during those years the Spanish nation had been

engaged in a desperate struggle against misbelievers. The Crusades had been merely an episode in the history of other nations. The existence of Spain had been one long Crusade. After fighting Mussulmans in the Old World, she began to fight heathens in the New. It was under the authority of a Papal bull that her children steered into unknown seas. It was under the standard of the cross that they marched fearlessly into the heart of great kingdoms. It was with the cry of "St. James for Spain," that they charged armies which outnumbered them a hundredfold. And men said that the Saint had heard the call, and had himself, in arms, on a grey war-horse, led the onset before which the worshippers of false gods had given way. After the battle, every excess of rapacity or cruelty was sufficiently vindicated by the plea that the sufferers were unbaptized. Avarice stimulated zeal. Zeal consecrated avarice. Proselytes and gold mines were sought with equal ardour. In the very year in which the Saxons, maddened by the exactions of Rome, broke loose from her yoke, the Spaniards, under the authority of Rome, made themselves masters of the empire and of the treasures of Montezuma. Thus Catholicism which, in the public mind of Northern Europe, was associated with spoliation and oppression, was in the public mind of Spain associated with liberty, victory, dominion, wealth, and glory.

It is not, therefore, strange that the effect of the great outbreak of Protestantism in one part of Christendom should have been to produce an equally violent outbreak of Catholic zeal in another. Two reformations were pushed on at once with equal energy and effect, a reformation of doctrine in the North, a reformation of manners and discipline in the South. In the course of a single generation, the whole spirit of the Church of Rome underwent a change. From the halls of the Vatican to the most

secluded hermitage of the Apennines, the great revival was every where felt and seen. All the institutions anciently devised for the propagation and defence of the faith were furbished up and made efficient. Fresh engines of still more formidable power were constructed. Every where old religious communities were remodelled and new religious communities called into existence. Within a year after the death of Leo, the order of Camaldoli was purified. The Capuchins restored the old Franciscan discipline, the midnight prayer and the life of silence. The Barnabites and the society of Somasca devoted themselves to the relief and education of the poor. To the Theatine order a still higher interest belongs. Its great object was the same with that of our early Methodists, namely, to supply the deficiencies of the parochial clergy. The Church of Rome, wiser than the Church of England, gave every countenance to the good work. The members of the new brotherhood preached to great multitudes in the streets and in the fields, prayed by the beds of the sick, and administered the last sacraments to the dying. Foremost among them in zeal and devotion was Gian Pietro Caraffa, afterwards Pope Paul the Fourth. In the convent of the Theatines at Venice, under the eye of Caraffa, a Spanish gentleman took up his abode, tended the poor in the hospitals, went about in rags, starved himself almost to death, and often sallied into the streets, mounted on stones, and, waving his hat to invite the passers-by, began to preach in a strange jargon of mingled Castilian and Tuscan. The Theatines were among the most zealous and rigid of men; but to this enthusiastic neophyte their discipline seemed lax, and their movements sluggish; for his own mind, naturally passionate and imaginative, had passed through a training which had given to all its peculiarities a morbid intensity and energy. In his

early life he had been the very prototype of the hero of Cervantes. The single study of the young Hidalgo had been chivalrous romance; and his existence had been one gorgeous day-dream of princesses rescued and infidels subdued. He had chosen a Dulcinea, "no countess, no duchess,"—these are his own words, —"but one of far higher station;" and he flattered himself with the hope of laying at her feet the keys of Moorish castles and the jewelled turbans of Asiatic kings. In the midst of these visions of martial glory and prosperous love, a severe wound stretched him on a bed of sickness. His constitution was shattered and he was doomed to be a cripple for life. The palm of strength, grace, and skill in knightly exercises, was no longer for him. He could no longer hope to strike down gigantic soldans, or to find favour in the sight of beautiful women. A new vision then arose in his mind, and mingled itself with his old delusions in a manner which to most Englishmen must seem singular, but which those who know how close was the union between religion and chivalry in Spain will be at no loss to understand. He would still be a soldier; he would still be a knight errant; but the soldier and knight errant of the spouse of Christ. He would smite the Great Red Dragon. He would be the champion of the Woman clothed with the Sun. He would break the charm under which false prophets held the souls of men in bondage. His restless spirit led him to the Syrian deserts, and to the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Thence he wandered back to the farthest West, and astonished the convents of Spain and the schools of France by his penances and vigils. The same lively imagination which had been employed in picturing the tumult of unreal battles, and the charms of unreal queens, now peopled his solitude with saints and angels. The Holy Virgin descended to commune with him. He

saw the Saviour face to face with the eye of flesh. Even those mysteries of religion which are the hardest trial of faith were in his case palpable to sight. It is difficult to relate without a pitying smile that, in the sacrifice of the mass, he saw transubstantiation take place, and that, as he stood praying on the steps of the Church of St. Dominic, he saw the Trinity in Unity, and wept aloud with joy and wonder. Such was the celebrated Ignatius Loyola, who, in the great Catholic reaction, bore the same part which Luther bore in the great Protestant movement.

Dissatisfied with the system of the Theatines, the enthusiastic Spaniard turned his face towards Rome. Poor, obscure, without a patron, without recommendations, he entered the city where now two princely temples, rich with painting and many-coloured marble, commemorate his great services to the Church; where his form stands sculptured in massive silver; where his bones, enshrined amidst jewels, are placed beneath the altar of God. His activity and zeal bore down all opposition; and under his rule the order of Jesuits began to exist, and grew rapidly to the full measure of his gigantic powers. With what vehemence, with what policy, with what exact discipline, with what dauntless courage, with what self-denial, with what forgetfulness of the dearest private ties, with what intense and stubborn devotion to a single end, with what unscrupulous laxity and versatility in the choice of means, the Jesuits fought the battle of their Church, is written in every page of the annals of Europe during several generations. In the order of Jesus was concentrated the quintessence of the Catholic spirit; and the history of the order of Jesus is the history of the great Catholic reaction. That order possessed itself at once of all the strongholds which command the public mind, of the pulpit, of the press, of the confessional, of the academies. Wherever the

Jesuit preached, the church was too small for the audience. The name of Jesuit on a title-page secured the circulation of a book. It was in the ears of the Jesuit that the powerful, the noble, and the beautiful, breathed the secret history of their lives. It was at the feet of the Jesuit that the youth of the higher and middle classes were brought up from childhood to manhood, from the first rudiments to the courses of rhetoric and philosophy. Literature and science, lately associated with infidelity or with heresy, now became the allies of orthodoxy. Dominant in the south of Europe, the great order soon went forth conquering and to conquer. In spite of oceans and deserts, of hunger and pestilence, of spies and penal laws, of dungeons and racks, of gibbets and quartering blocks, Jesuits were to be found under every disguise, and in every country; scholars, physicians, merchants, serving-men; in the hostile court of Sweden, in the old manor houses of Cheshire, among the hovels of Connaught; arguing, instructing, consoling, stealing away the hearts of the young, animating the courage of the timid, holding up the crucifix before the eyes of the dying. Nor was it less their office to plot against the thrones and lives of apostate kings, to spread evil rumours, to raise tumults, to inflame civil wars, to arm the hand of the assassin. Inflexible in nothing but in their fidelity to the Church, they were equally ready to appeal in her cause to the spirit of loyalty and to the spirit of freedom. Extreme doctrines of obedience and extreme doctrines of liberty, the right of rulers to misgovern the people, the right of every one of the people to plunge his knife in the heart of a bad ruler, were inculcated by the same man, according as he addressed himself to the subject of Philip or to the subject of Elizabeth. Some described these divines as the most rigid, others as the most indulgent of

spiritual directors; and both descriptions were correct. The truly devout listened with awe to the high and saintly morality of the Jesuit. The gay cavalier who had run his rival through the body, the frail beauty who had forgotten her marriage-vow, found in the Jesuit an easy well-bred man of the world, who knew how to make allowance for the little irregularities of people of fashion. The confessor was strict or lax, according to the temper of the penitent. The first object was to drive no person out of the pale of the Church. Since there were bad people, it was better that they should be bad Catholics than bad Protestants. If a person was so unfortunate as to be a bravo, a libertine, or a gambler, that was no reason for making him a heretic too.

The Old World was not wide enough for this strange activity. The Jesuits invaded all the countries which the great maritime discoveries of the preceding age had laid open to European enterprise. They were to be found in the depths of the Peruvian mines, at the marts of the African slave-caravans, on the shores of the Spice Islands, in the observatories of China. They made converts in regions which neither avarice nor curiosity had tempted any of their countrymen to enter; and preached and disputed in tongues of which no other native of the West understood a word.

The spirit which appeared so eminently in this order animated the whole Catholic world. The Court of Rome itself was purified. During the generation which preceded the Reformation, that court had been a scandal to the Christian name. Its annals are black with treason, murder, and incest. Even its more respectable members were utterly unfit to be ministers of religion. They were men like Leo the Tenth; men who, with the Latinity of the Augustan age, had acquired its atheistical and scoffing spirit. They re-

garded those Christian mysteries, of which they were stewards, just as the Augur Cicero and the High Pontiff Cæsar regarded the Sibylline books and the pecking of the sacred chickens. Among themselves, they spoke of the Incarnation, the Eucharist, and the Trinity, in the same tone in which Cotta and Velleius talked of the oracle of Delphi or of the voice of Faunus in the mountains. Their years glided by in a soft dream of sensual and intellectual voluptuousness. Choice cookery, delicious wines, lovely women, hounds, falcons, horses, newly discovered manuscripts of the classics, sonnets and burlesque romances in the sweetest Tuscan, just as licentious as a fine sense of the graceful would permit, plate from the hand of Benvenuto, designs for palaces by Michael Angelo, frescoes by Raphael, busts, mosaics, and gems just dug up from among the ruins of ancient temples and villas, these things were the delight and even the serious business of their lives. Letters and the fine arts undoubtedly owe much to this not inelegant sloth. But when the great stirring of the mind of Europe began, when doctrine after doctrine was assailed, when nation after nation withdrew from communion with the successor of St. Peter, it was felt that the Church could not be safely confided to chiefs whose highest praise was that they were good judges of Latin compositions, of paintings, and of statues, whose severest studies had a pagan character, and who were suspected of laughing in secret at the sacraments which they administered, and of believing no more of the Gospel than of the *Morgante Maggiore*. Men of a very different class now rose to the direction of ecclesiastical affairs, men whose spirit resembled that of Dunstan and of Becket. The Roman Pontiffs exhibited in their own persons all the austerity of the early anchorites of Syria. Paul the Fourth brought to the Papal throne the same fervent zeal which had

carried him into the Theatine convent. Pius the Fifth, under his gorgeous vestments, wore day and night the hair shirt of a simple friar, walked barefoot in the streets at the head of processions, found, even in the midst of his most pressing avocations, time for private prayer, often regretted that the public duties of his station were unfavourable to growth in holiness, and edified his flock by innumerable instances of humility, charity, and forgiveness of personal injuries, while, at the same time, he upheld the authority of his see, and the unadulterated doctrines of his Church, with all the stubbornness and vehemence of Hildebrand. Gregory the Thirteenth exerted himself not only to imitate but to surpass Pius in the severe virtues of his sacred profession. As was the head, such were the members. The change in the spirit of the Catholic world may be traced in every walk of literature and of art. It will be at once perceived by every person who compares the poem of Tasso with that of Ariosto, or the monuments of Sixtus the Fifth with those of Leo the Tenth.

But it was not on moral influence alone that the Catholic Church relied. The civil sword in Spain and Italy was unsparingly employed in her support. The Inquisition was armed with new powers and inspired with a new energy. If Protestantism, or the semblance of Protestantism, showed itself in any quarter, it was instantly met, not by petty, teasing persecution, but by persecution of that sort which bows down and crushes all but a very few select spirits. Whoever was suspected of heresy, whatever his rank, his learning, or his reputation, knew that he must purge himself to the satisfaction of a severe and vigilant tribunal, or die by fire. Heretical books were sought out and destroyed with similar rigour. Works which were once in every house were so effectually suppressed that no copy of them is now to be found in

the most extensive libraries. One book in particular, entitled "Of the Benefits of the Death of Christ," had this fate. It was written in Tuscan, was many times reprinted, and was eagerly read in every part of Italy. But the inquisitors detected in it the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone. They proscribed it; and it is now as hopelessly lost as the second decade of Livy.

Thus, while the Protestant reformation proceeded rapidly at one extremity of Europe, the Catholic revival went on as rapidly at the other. About half a century after the great separation, there were throughout the North Protestant governments and Protestant nations. In the South were governments and nations actuated by the most intense zeal for the ancient Church. Between these two hostile regions lay, morally as well as geographically, a great debatable land. In France, Belgium, Southern Germany, Hungary, and Poland, the contest was still undecided. The governments of those countries had not renounced their connexion with Rome; but the Protestants were numerous, powerful, bold, and active. In France, they formed a commonwealth within the realm, held fortresses, were able to bring great armies into the field, and had treated with their sovereign on terms of equality. In Poland, the King was still a Catholic; but the Protestants had the upper hand in the Diet, filled the chief offices in the administration, and, in the large towns, took possession of the parish churches. "It appeared," says the Papal nuncio, "that in Poland, Protestantism would completely supersede Catholicism." In Bavaria, the state of things was nearly the same. The Protestants had a majority in the Assembly of the States, and demanded from the duke concessions in favour of their religion, as the price of their subsidies. In Transylvania, the House of Austria was unable to prevent the Diet from confiscating, by one

sweeping decree, the estates of the Church. In Austria Proper it was generally said that only one thirtieth part of the population could be counted on as good Catholics. In Belgium the adherents of the new opinions were reckoned by hundreds of thousands.

The history of the two succeeding generations is the history of the struggle between Protestantism possessed of the North of Europe, and Catholicism possessed of the South, for the doubtful territory which lay between. All the weapons of carnal and of spiritual warfare were employed. Both sides may boast of great talents and of great virtues. Both have to blush for many follies and crimes. At first, the chances seemed to be decidedly in favour of Protestantism; but the victory remained with the Church of Rome. On every point she was successful. If we overleap another half century, we find her victorious and dominant in France, Belgium, Bavaria, Bohemia, Austria, Poland, and Hungary. Nor has Protestantism, in the course of two hundred years, been able to reconquer any portion of what was then lost.

It is, moreover, not to be dissembled that this triumph of the Papacy is to be chiefly attributed, not to the force of arms, but to a great reflux in public opinion. During the first half century after the commencement of the Reformation, the current of feeling, in the countries on this side of the Alps and of the Pyrenees, ran impetuously towards the new doctrines. Then the tide turned, and rushed as fiercely in the opposite direction. Neither during the one period, nor during the other, did much depend upon the event of battles or sieges. The Protestant movement was hardly checked for an instant by the defeat at Muhlberg. The Catholic reaction went on at full speed in spite of the destruction of the Armada. It is difficult to say whether the violence of the first blow or of the recoil was the greater. Fifty years

after the Lutheran separation, Catholicism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean. A hundred years after the separation, Protestantism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic. The causes of this memorable turn in human affairs well deserve to be investigated.

The contest between the two parties bore some resemblance to the fencing-match in Shakspeare; "Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes." The war between Luther and Leo was a war between firm faith and unbelief, between zeal and apathy, between energy and indolence, between seriousness and frivolity, between a pure morality and vice. Very different was the war which degenerate Protestantism had to wage against regenerate Catholicism. To the debauchees, the poisoners, the atheists, who had worn the tiara during the generation which preceded the Reformation, had succeeded Popes who, in religious fervour and severe sanctity of manners, might bear a comparison with Cyprian or Ambrose. The order of Jesuits alone could show many men not inferior in sincerity, constancy, courage, and austerity of life, to the Apostles of the Reformation. But, while danger had thus called forth in the bosom of the Church of Rome many of the highest qualities of the Reformers, the Reformers had contracted some of the corruptions which had been justly censured in the Church of Rome. They had become lukewarm and worldly. Their great old leaders had been borne to the grave, and had left no successors. Among the Protestant princes there was little or no hearty Protestant feeling. Elizabeth herself was a Protestant rather from policy than from firm conviction. James the First, in order to effect his favourite object of marrying his son into one of the great continental houses, was ready to make immense concessions to Rome, and even to

admit a modified primacy in the Pope. Henry the Fourth twice abjured the reformed doctrines from interested motives. The Elector of Saxony, the natural head of the Protestant party in Germany, submitted to become, at the most important crisis of the struggle, a tool in the hands of the Papists. Among the Catholic sovereigns, on the other hand, we find a religious zeal often amounting to fanaticism. Philip the Second was a Papist in a very different sense from that in which Elizabeth was a Protestant. Maximilian of Bavaria, brought up under the teaching of the Jesuits, was a fervent missionary wielding the powers of a prince. The Emperor Ferdinand the Second deliberately put his throne to hazard over and over again, rather than make the smallest concession to the spirit of religious innovation. Sigismund of Sweden lost a crown which he might have preserved if he would have renounced the Catholic faith. In short, every where on the Protestant side we see languor; every where on the Catholic side we see ardour and devotion.

Not only was there, at this time, a much more intense zeal among the Catholics than among the Protestants; but the whole zeal of the Catholics was directed against the Protestants, while almost the whole zeal of the Protestants was directed against each other. Within the Catholic Church there were no serious disputes on points of doctrine. The decisions of the Council of Trent were received; and the Jansenian controversy had not yet arisen. The whole force of Rome was, therefore, effective for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Reformation. On the other hand, the force which ought to have fought the battle of the Reformation was exhausted in civil conflict. While Jesuit preachers, Jesuit confessors, Jesuit teachers of youth, overspread Europe, eager to expend every faculty of their minds

and every drop of their blood in the cause of their Church, Protestant doctors were confuting, and Protestant rulers were punishing, sectaries who were just as good Protestants as themselves;

"Cumque superba foret BABYLON spolianda tropæis,
Bella geri placuit nullos habitura triumphos."

In the Palatinate, a Calvinistic prince persecuted the Lutherans. In Saxony, a Lutheran prince persecuted the Calvinists. Every body who objected to any of the articles of the Confession of Augsburg was banished from Sweden. In Scotland, Melville was disputing with other Protestants on questions of ecclesiastical government. In England, the gaols were filled with men who, though zealous for the Reformation, did not exactly agree with the Court on all points of discipline and doctrine. Some were persecuted for denying the tenet of reprobation; some for not wearing surplices. The Irish people might at that time have been, in all probability, reclaimed from Popery, at the expense of half the zeal and activity which Whitgift employed in oppressing Puritans, and Martin Marprelate in reviling bishops.

As the Catholics in zeal and in union had a great advantage over the Protestants, so had they also an infinitely superior organization. In truth Protestantism, for aggressive purposes, had no organization at all. The Reformed Churches were mere national Churches. The Church of England existed for England alone. It was an institution as purely local as the Court of Common Pleas, and was utterly without any machinery for foreign operations. The Church of Scotland, in the same manner, existed for Scotland alone. The operations of the Catholic Church, on the other hand, took in the whole world. Nobody at Lambeth or at Edinburgh troubled himself about

what was doing in Poland or Bavaria. But Cracow and Munich were at Rome objects of as much interest as the purlieus of St. John Lateran. Our island, the head of the Protestant interest, did not send out a single missionary or a single instructor of youth to the scene of the great spiritual war. Not a single seminary was established here for the purpose of furnishing a supply of such persons to foreign countries. On the other hand, Germany, Hungary, and Poland were filled with able and active Catholic emissaries of Spanish or Italian birth; and colleges for the instruction of the northern youth were founded at Rome. The spiritual force of Protestantism was a mere local militia, which might be useful in case of an invasion, but could not be sent abroad, and could therefore make no conquests. Rome had such a local militia; but she had also a force disposable at a moment's notice for foreign service, however dangerous or disagreeable. If it was thought at head-quarters that a Jesuit at Palermo was qualified by his talents and character to withstand the Reformers in Lithuania, the order was instantly given and instantly obeyed. In a month, the faithful servant of the Church was preaching, catechising, confessing, beyond the Niemen.

It is impossible to deny that the polity of the Church of Rome is the very masterpiece of human wisdom. In truth, nothing but such a polity could, against such assaults, have borne up such doctrines. The experience of twelve hundred eventful years, the ingenuity and patient care of forty generations of statesmen, have improved that polity to such perfection, that, among the contrivances which have been devised for deceiving and oppressing mankind, it occupies the highest place. The stronger our conviction that reason and Scripture were decidedly on the side of Protestantism, the greater is the reluctant

admiration with which we regard that system of tactics against which reason and Scripture were employed in vain.

If we went at large into this most interesting subject we should fill volumes. We will, therefore, at present, advert to only one important part of the policy of the Church of Rome. She thoroughly understands, what no other church has ever understood, how to deal with enthusiasts. In some sects, particularly in infant sects, enthusiasm is suffered to be rampant. In other sects, particularly in sects long established and richly endowed, it is regarded with aversion. The Catholic Church neither submits to enthusiasm nor proscribes it, but uses it. She considers it as a great moving force which in itself, like the muscular powers of a fine horse, is neither good nor evil, but which may be so directed as to produce great good or great evil; and she assumes the direction to herself. It would be absurd to run down a horse like a wolf. It would be still more absurd to let him run wild, breaking fences and trampling down passengers. The rational course is to subjugate his will without impairing his vigour, to teach him to obey the rein, and then to urge him to full speed. When once he knows his master, he is valuable in proportion to his strength and spirit. Just such has been the system of the Church of Rome with regard to enthusiasts. She knows that, when religious feelings have obtained the complete empire of the mind, they impart a strange energy, that they raise men above the dominion of pain and pleasure, that obloquy becomes glory, that death itself is contemplated only as the beginning of a higher and happier life. She knows that a person in this state is no object of contempt. He may be vulgar, ignorant, visionary, extravagant; but he will do and suffer things which it is for her interest that some-

body should do and suffer, yet from which calm and sober-minded men would shrink. She accordingly enlists him in her service, assigns to him some forlorn hope, in which intrepidity and impetuosity are more wanted than judgment and self-command, and sends him forth with her benedictions and her applause.

In England it not unfrequently happens that a tinker or coalheaver hears a sermon or falls in with a tract which alarms him about the state of his soul. If he be a man of excitable nerves and strong imagination, he thinks himself given over to the Evil Power. He doubts whether he has not committed the unpardonable sin. He imputes every wild fancy that springs up in his mind to the whisper of a fiend. His sleep is broken by dreams of the great judgment-seat, the open books, and the unquenchable fire. If, in order to escape from these vexing thoughts, he flies to amusement or to licentious indulgence, the delusive relief only makes his misery darker and more hopeless. At length a turn takes place. He is reconciled to his offended Maker. To borrow the fine imagery of one who had himself been thus tried, he emerges from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, from the dark land of gins and snares, of quagmires and precipices, of evil spirits and ravenous beasts. The sunshine is on his path. He ascends the Delectable Mountains, and catches from their summit a distant view of the shining city which is the end of his pilgrimage. Then arises in his mind a natural and surely not a censurable desire, to impart to others the thoughts of which his own heart is full, to warn the careless, to comfort those who are troubled in spirit. The impulse which urges him to devote his whole life to the teaching of religion is a strong passion in the guise of a duty. He exhorts his neighbours; and, if he be a man of strong parts,

he often does so with great effect. He pleads as if he were pleading for his life, with tears, and pathetic gestures, and burning words; and he soon finds with delight, not perhaps wholly unmixed with the alloy of human infirmity, that his rude eloquence rouses and melts hearers who sleep very composedly while the rector preaches on the apostolical succession. Zeal for God, love for his fellow-creatures, pleasure in the exercise of his newly discovered powers, impel him to become a preacher. He has no quarrel with the establishment, no objection to its formularies, its government, or its vestments. He would gladly be admitted among its humblest ministers. But, admitted or rejected, he feels that his vocation is determined. His orders have come down to him, not through a long and doubtful series of Arian and Popish bishops, but direct from on high. His commission is the same that on the Mountain of Ascension was given to the Eleven. Nor will he, for lack of human credentials, spare to deliver the glorious message with which he is charged by the true Head of the Church. For a man thus minded, there is within the pale of the establishment no place. He has been at no college; he cannot construe a Greek author or write a Latin theme; and he is told that, if he remains in the communion of the Church, he must do so as a hearer, and that, if he is resolved to be a teacher, he must begin by being a schismatic. His choice is soon made. He harangues on Tower Hill or in Smithfield. A congregation is formed. A licence is obtained. A plain brick building, with a desk and benches, is run up, and named Ebenezer or Bethel. In a few weeks the Church has lost for ever a hundred families, not one of which entertained the least scruple about her articles, her liturgy, her government, or her ceremonies.

Far different is the policy of Rome. The ignorant enthusiast whom the Anglican Church makes an enemy, and, whatever the polite and learned may think, a most dangerous enemy, the Catholic Church makes a champion. She bids him nurse his beard, covers him with a gown and hood of coarse dark stuff, ties a rope round his waist, and sends him forth to teach in her name. He costs her nothing. He takes not a ducat away from the revenues of her beneficed clergy. He lives by the alms of those who respect his spiritual character, and are grateful for his instructions. He preaches, not exactly in the style of Massillon, but in a way which moves the passions of uneducated hearers; and all his influence is employed to strengthen the Church of which he is a minister. To that Church he becomes as strongly attached as any of the cardinals whose scarlet carriages and liveries crowd the entrance of the palace on the Quirinal. In this way the Church of Rome unites in herself all the strength of establishment, and all the strength of dissent. With the utmost pomp of a dominant hierarchy above, she has all the energy of the voluntary system below. It would be easy to mention very recent instances in which the hearts of hundreds of thousands, estranged from her by the selfishness, sloth, and cowardice of the beneficed clergy, have been brought back by the zeal of the begging friars.

Even for female agency there is a place in her system. To devout women she assigns spiritual functions, dignities, and magistracies. In our country, if a noble lady is moved by more than ordinary zeal for the propagation of religion, the chance is that, though she may disapprove of no doctrine or ceremony of the Established Church, she will end by giving her name to a new schism. If a pious and benevolent woman enters the cells of a prison to

pray with the most unhappy and degraded of her own sex, she does so without any authority from the Church. No line of action is traced out for her; and it is well if the Ordinary does not complain of her intrusion, and if the Bishop does not shake his head at such irregular benevolence. At Rome, the Countess of Huntingdon would have a place in the calendar as St. Selina, and Mrs. Fry would be foundress and first Superior of the Blessed Order of Sisters of the Gaols.

Place Ignatius Loyola at Oxford. He is certain to become the head of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome. He is certain to be the first General of a new society devoted to the interests and honour of the Church. Place St. Theresa in London. Her restless enthusiasm ferments into madness, not untinctured with craft. She becomes the prophetess, the mother of the faithful, holds disputations with the devil, issues sealed pardons to her adorers, and lies in of the Shiloh. Place Joanna Southcote at Rome. She founds an order of barefooted Carmelites, every one of whom is ready to suffer martyrdom for the Church; a solemn service is consecrated to her memory; and her statue, placed over the holy water, strikes the eye of every stranger who enters St. Peter's.

We have dwelt long on this subject, because we believe that, of the many causes to which the Church of Rome owed her safety and her triumph at the close of the sixteenth century, the chief was the profound policy with which she used the fanaticism of such persons as St. Ignatius and St. Theresa.

The Protestant party was now indeed vanquished and humbled. In France, so strong had been the Catholic reaction that Henry the Fourth found it necessary to choose between his religion and his crown. In spite of his clear hereditary right, in spite

of his eminent personal qualities, he saw that, unless he reconciled himself to the Church of Rome, he could not count on the fidelity even of those gallant gentlemen whose impetuous valour had turned the tide of battle at Ivry. In Belgium, Poland, and Southern Germany, Catholicism had obtained complete ascendency. The resistance of Bohemia was put down. The Palatinate was conquered. Upper and Lower Saxony were overflowed by Catholic invaders. The King of Denmark stood forth as the Protector of the Reformed Churches: he was defeated, driven out of the empire, and attacked in his own possessions. The armies of the House of Austria pressed on, subjugated Pomerania, and were stopped in their progress only by the ramparts of Stralsund.

And now again the tide turned. Two violent outbreaks of religious feeling in opposite directions had given a character to the history of a whole century. Protestantism had at first driven back Catholicism to the Alps and the Pyrenees. Catholicism had rallied, and had driven back Protestantism even to the German Ocean. Then the great southern reaction began to slacken, as the great northern movement had slackened before. The zeal of the Catholics waxed cool. Their union was dissolved. The paroxysm of religious excitement was over on both sides. One party had degenerated as far from the spirit of Loyola as the other from the spirit of Luther. During three generations religion had been the mainspring of politics. The revolutions and civil wars of France, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, the long struggle between Philip and Elizabeth, the bloody competition for the Bohemian crown, had all originated in theological disputes. But a great change now took place. The contest which was raging in Germany lost its religious character. It was now, on one side, less a contest for the

spiritual ascendency of the Church of Rome than for the temporal ascendency of the House of Austria. On the other side, it was less a contest for the reformed doctrines than for national independence. Governments began to form themselves into new combinations, in which community of political interest was far more regarded than community of religious belief. Even at Rome the progress of the Catholic arms was observed with mixed feelings. The Supreme Pontiff was a sovereign prince of the second rank, and was anxious about the balance of power as well as about the propagation of truth. It was known that he dreaded the rise of an universal monarchy even more than he desired the prosperity of the Universal Church. At length a great event announced to the world that the war of sects had ceased, and that the war of states had succeeded. A coalition, including Calvinists, Lutherans, and Catholics, was formed against the House of Austria. At the head of that coalition were the first statesman and the first warrior of the age; the former a prince of the Catholic Church, distinguished by the vigour and success with which he had put down the Huguenots; the latter a Protestant king who owed his throne to a revolution caused by hatred of Popery. The alliance of Richelieu and Gustavus marks the time at which the great religious struggle terminated. The war which followed was a war for the equilibrium of Europe. When, at length, the peace of Westphalia was concluded, it appeared that the Church of Rome remained in full possession of a vast dominion which in the middle of the preceding century she seemed to be on the point of losing. No part of Europe remained Protestant, except that part which had become thoroughly Protestant before the generation which heard Luther preach had passed away.

Since that time there has been no religious war

between Catholics and Protestants as such. In the time of Cromwell, Protestant England was united with Catholic France, then governed by a priest, against Catholic Spain. William the Third, the eminently Protestant hero, was at the head of a coalition which included many Catholic powers, and which was secretly favoured even by Rome, against the Catholic Lewis. In the time of Anne, Protestant England and Protestant Holland joined with Catholic Savoy and Catholic Portugal, for the purpose of transferring the crown of Spain from one bigoted Catholic to another.

The geographical frontier between the two religions has continued to run almost precisely where it ran at the close of the Thirty Years' War; nor has Protestantism given any proofs of that "expansive power" which has been ascribed to it. But the Protestant boasts, and boasts most justly, that wealth, civilisation, and intelligence, have increased far more on the northern than on the southern side of the boundary, and that countries so little favoured by nature as Scotland and Prussia are now among the most flourishing and best governed portions of the world, while the marble palaces of Genoa are deserted, while banditti infest the beautiful shores of Campania, while the fertile seacoast of the Pontifical State is abandoned to buffaloes and wild boars. It cannot be doubted that, since the sixteenth century, the Protestant nations have made decidedly greater progress than their neighbours. The progress made by those nations in which Protestantism, though not finally successful, yet maintained a long struggle, and left permanent traces, has generally been considerable. But when we come to the Catholic Land, to the part of Europe in which the first spark of reformation was trodden out as soon as it appeared, and from which proceeded the impulse which drove Protestantism

back, we find, at best, a very slow progress, and on the whole a retrogression. Compare Denmark and Portugal. When Luther began to preach, the superiority of the Portuguese was unquestionable. At present, the superiority of the Danes is no less so. Compare Edinburgh and Florence. Edinburgh has owed less to climate, to soil, and to the fostering care of rulers than any capital, Protestant or Catholic. In all these respects, Florence has been singularly happy. Yet whoever knows, what Florence and Edinburgh were in the generation preceding the Reformation, and what they are now, will acknowledge that some great cause has, during the last three centuries, operated to raise one part of the European family, and to depress the other. Compare the history of England and that of Spain during the last century. In arms, arts, sciences, letters, commerce, agriculture, the contrast is most striking. The distinction is not confined to this side of the Atlantic. The colonies planted by England in America have immeasurably outgrown in power those planted by Spain. Yet we have no reason to believe that, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Castilian was in any respect inferior to the Englishman. Our firm belief is, that the North owes its great civilisation and prosperity chiefly to the moral effect of the Protestant Reformation, and that the decay of the Southern countries of Europe is to be mainly ascribed to the great Catholic revival.

About a hundred years after the final settlement of the boundary line between Protestantism and Catholicism, began to appear the signs of the fourth great peril of the Church of Rome. The storm which was now rising against her was of a very different kind from those which had preceded it. Those who had formerly attacked her had questioned only a part of her doctrines. A school was now growing up which

rejected the whole. The Albigenses, the Lollards, the Lutherans, the Calvinists, had a positive religious system, and were strongly attached to it. The creed of the new sectaries was altogether negative. They took one of their premises from the Protestants, and one from the Catholics. From the latter they borrowed the principle, that Catholicism was the only pure and genuine Christianity. With the former, they held that some parts of the Catholic system were contrary to reason. The conclusion was obvious. Two propositions, each of which separately is compatible with the most exalted piety, formed, when held in conjunction, the groundwork of a system of irreligion. The doctrine of Bossuet, that transubstantiation is affirmed in the Gospel, and the doctrine of Tillotson, that transubstantiation is an absurdity, when put together, produced by logical necessity the inferences of Voltaire.

Had the sect which was rising at Paris been a sect of mere scoffers, it is very improbable that it would have left deep traces of its existence in the institutions and manners of Europe. Mere negation, mere Epicurean infidelity, as Lord Bacon most justly observes, has never disturbed the peace of the world. It furnishes no motive for action. It inspires no enthusiasm. It has no missionaries, no crusaders, no martyrs. If the Patriarch of the Holy Philosophical Church had contented himself with making jokes about Saul's asses and David's wives, and with criticizing the poetry of Ezekiel in the same narrow spirit in which he criticized that of Shakspeare, Rome would have had little to fear. But it is due to him and to his compeers to say that the real secret of their strength lay in the truth which was mingled with their errors, and in the generous enthusiasm which was hidden under their flippancy. They were men who, with all their faults, moral and

intellectual, sincerely and earnestly desired the improvement of the condition of the human race, whose blood boiled at the sight of cruelty and injustice, who made manful war, with every faculty which they possessed, on what they considered as abuses, and who on many signal occasions placed themselves gallantly between the powerful and the oppressed. While they assailed Christianity with a rancour and unfairness disgraceful to men who called themselves philosophers, they yet had, in far greater measure than their opponents, that charity towards men of all classes and races which Christianity enjoins. Religious persecution, judicial torture, arbitrary imprisonment, the unnecessary multiplication of capital punishments, the delay and chicanery of tribunals, the exactions of farmers of the revenue, slavery, the slave trade, were the constant subjects of their lively satire and eloquent disquisitions. When an innocent man was broken on the wheel at Toulouse, when a youth, guilty only of an indiscretion, was beheaded at Abbeville, when a brave officer, borne down by public injustice, was dragged, with a gag in his mouth, to die on the Place de Grêve, a voice instantly went forth from the banks of Lake Leman, which made itself heard from Moscow to Cadiz, and which sentenced the unjust judges to the contempt and detestation of all Europe. The really efficient weapons with which the philosophers assailed the evangelical faith were borrowed from the evangelical morality. The ethical and dogmatical parts of the Gospel were unhappily turned against each other. On one side was a church boasting of the purity of a doctrine derived from the Apostles, but disgraced by the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by the murder of the best of kings, by the war of Cevennes, by the destruction of Port-Royal. On the other side was a sect laughing at the Scriptures, shooting out the tongue at the sacraments, but

ready to encounter principalities and powers in the cause of justice, mercy, and toleration.

Irreligion, accidentally associated with philanthropy, triumphed for a time over religion accidentally associated with political and social abuses. Every thing gave way to the zeal and activity of the new reformers. In France, every man distinguished in letters was found in their ranks. Every year gave birth to works in which the fundamental principles of the Church were attacked with argument, invective, and ridicule. The Church made no defence, except by acts of power. Censures were pronounced: books were seized: insults were offered to the remains of infidel writers; but no Bossuet, no Pascal, came forth to encounter Voltaire. There appeared not a single defence of the Catholic doctrine which produced any considerable effect, or which is now even remembered. A bloody and unsparing persecution, like that which put down the Albigenses, might have put down the philosophers. But the time for De Montforts and Dominics had gone by. The punishments which the priests were still able to inflict were sufficient to irritate, but not sufficient to destroy. The war was between power on one side, and wit on the other; and the power was under far more restraint than the wit. Orthodoxy soon became a synonyme for ignorance and stupidity. It was as necessary to the character of an accomplished man that he should despise the religion of his country, as that he should know his letters. The new doctrines spread rapidly through Christendom. Paris was the capital of the whole continent. French was every where the language of polite circles. The literary glory of Italy and Spain had departed. That of Germany had not dawned. That of England shone, as yet, for the English alone. The teachers of France were the teachers of Europe. The Parisian opinions

spread fast among the educated classes beyond the Alps; nor could the vigilance of the Inquisition prevent the contraband importation of the new heresy into Castile and Portugal. Governments, even arbitrary governments, saw with pleasure the progress of this philosophy. Numerous reforms, generally laudable, sometimes hurried on without sufficient regard to time, to place, and to public feeling, showed the extent of its influence. The rulers of Prussia, of Russia, of Austria, and of many smaller states, were supposed to be among the initiated.

The Church of Rome was still, in outward show, as stately and splendid as ever; but her foundation was undermined. No state had quitted her communion or confiscated her revenues; but the reverence of the people was every where departing from her.

The first great warning stroke was the fall of that society which, in the conflict with Protestantism, had saved the Catholic Church from destruction. The order of Jesus had never recovered from the injury received in the struggle with Port-Royal. It was now still more rudely assailed by the philosophers. Its spirit was broken; its reputation was tainted. Insulted by all the men of genius in Europe, condemned by the civil magistrate, feebly defended by the chiefs of the hierarchy, it fell: and great was the fall of it.

The movement went on with increasing speed. The first generation of the new sect passed away. The doctrines of Voltaire were inherited and exaggerated by successors who bore to him the same relation which the Anabaptists bore to Luther, or the Fifth-Monarchy men to Pym. At length the Revolution came. Down went the old Church of France, with all its pomp and wealth. Some of its priests purchased a maintenance by separating them-

selves from Rome, and by becoming the authors of a fresh schism. Some, rejoicing in the new license, flung away their sacred vestments, proclaimed that their whole life had been an imposture, insulted and persecuted the religion of which they had been ministers, and distinguished themselves, even in the Jacobin Club and the Commune of Paris, by the excess of their impudence and ferocity. Others, more faithful to their principles, were butchered by scores without a trial, drowned, shot, hung on lamp-posts. Thousands fled from their country to take sanctuary under the shade of hostile altars. The churches were closed; the bells were silent; the shrines were plundered; the silver crucifixes were melted down. Buffoons, dressed in copes and surplices, came dancing the *carmagnole* even to the bar of the Convention. The bust of Marat was substituted for the statues of the martyrs of Christianity. A prostitute, seated on a chair of state in the chancel of Notre Dame, received the adoration of thousands, who exclaimed that at length, for the first time, those ancient Gothic arches had resounded with the accents of truth. The new unbelief was as intolerant as the old superstition. To show reverence for religion was to incur the suspicion of disaffection. It was not without imminent danger that the priest baptized the infant, joined the hands of lovers, or listened to the confession of the dying. The absurd worship of the Goddess of Reason was, indeed, of short duration; but the deism of Robespierre and Lepaux was not less hostile to the Catholic faith than the atheism of Clootz and Chaumette.

Nor were the calamities of the Church confined to France. The revolutionary spirit, attacked by all Europe, beat all Europe back, became conqueror in its turn, and, not satisfied with the Belgian cities and the rich domains of the spiritual electors, went

raging over the Rhine and through the passes of the Alps. Throughout the whole of the great war against Protestantism, Italy and Spain had been the base of the Catholic operations. Spain was now the obsequious vassal of the infidels. Italy was subjugated by them. To her ancient principalities succeeded the Cisalpine republic, and the Ligurian republic, and the Parthenopean republic. The shrine of Loretto was stripped of the treasures piled up by the devotion of six hundred years. The convents of Rome were pillaged. The tricoloured flag floated on the top of the Castle of St. Angelo. The successor of St. Peter was carried away captive by the unbelievers. He died a prisoner in their hands; and even the honours of sepulture were long withheld from his remains.

It is not strange that, in the year 1799, even sagacious observers should have thought that, at length, the hour of the Church of Rome was come. An infidel power ascendant, the Pope dying in captivity, the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country on Protestant alms, the noblest edifices which the munificence of former ages had consecrated to the worship of God turned into temples of Victory, or into banqueting-houses for political societies, or into Theophilanthropic chapels, such signs might well be supposed to indicate the approaching end of that long domination.

But the end was not yet. Again doomed to death, the milk-white hind was still fated not to die. Even before the funeral rites had been performed over the ashes of Pius the Sixth, a great reaction had commenced, which, after the lapse of more than forty years, appears to be still in progress. Anarchy had had its day. A new order of things rose out of the confusion, new dynasties, new laws, new titles; and amidst them emerged

the ancient religion. The Arabs have a fable that the Great Pyramid was built by antediluvian kings, and alone, of all the works of men, bore the weight of the flood. Such as this was the fate of the Papacy. It had been buried under the great inundation; but its deep foundations had remained unshaken; and, when the waters abated, it appeared alone amidst the ruins of a world which had passed away. The republic of Holland was gone, and the empire of Germany, and the Great Council of Venice, and the old Helvetian League, and the House of Bourbon, and the parliaments and aristocracy of France. Europe was full of young creations, a French empire, a kingdom of Italy, a Confederation of the Rhine. Nor had the late events affected only territorial limits and political institutions. The distribution of property, the composition and spirit of society, had, through great part of Catholic Europe, undergone a complete change. But the unchangeable Church was still there.

Some future historian, as able and temperate as Professor Ranke, will, we hope, trace the progress of the Catholic revival of the nineteenth century. We feel that we are drawing too near our own time, and that, if we go on, we shall be in danger of saying much which may be supposed to indicate, and which will certainly excite, angry feelings. We will, therefore, make only one more observation, which, in our opinion, is deserving of serious attention.

During the eighteenth century, the influence of the Church of Rome was constantly on the decline. Unbelief made extensive conquests in all the Catholic countries of Europe, and in some countries obtained a complete ascendency. The Papacy was at length brought so low as to be an object of derision to infidels, and of pity rather than of hatred

to Protestants. During the nineteenth century, this fallen Church has been gradually rising from her depressed state and reconquering her old dominion. No person who calmly reflects on what, within the last few years, has passed in Spain, in Italy, in South America, in Ireland, in the Netherlands, in Prussia, even in France, can doubt that the power of this Church over the hearts and minds of men is now greater far than it was when the Encyclopædia and the Philosophical Dictionary appeared. It is surely remarkable, that neither the moral revolution of the eighteenth century, nor the moral counter-revolution of the nineteenth, should, in any perceptible degree, have added to the domain of Protestantism. During the former period, whatever was lost to Catholicism was lost also to Christianity; during the latter, whatever was regained by Christianity in Catholic countries was regained also by Catholicism. We should naturally have expected that many minds, on the way from superstition to infidelity, or on the way back from infidelity to superstition, would have stopped at an intermediate point. Between the doctrines taught in the schools of the Jesuits, and those which were maintained at the little supper parties of the Baron Holbach, there is a vast interval, in which the human mind, it should seem, might find for itself some resting-place more satisfactory than either of the two extremes. And, at the time of the Reformation, millions found such a resting-place. Whole nations then renounced Popery without ceasing to believe in a first cause, in a future life, or in the Divine mission of Jesus. In the last century, on the other hand, when a Catholic renounced his belief in the real presence, it was a thousand to one that he renounced his belief in the Gospel too; and, when the reaction took place

with belief in the Gospel came back belief in the real presence.

We by no means venture to deduce from these phænomena any general law; but we think it a most remarkable fact, that no Christian nation, which did not adopt the principles of the Reformation before the end of the sixteenth century, should ever have adopted them. Catholic communities have, since that time, become infidel and become Catholic again; but none has become Protestant.

Here we close this hasty sketch of one of the most important portions of the history of mankind. Our readers will have great reason to feel obliged to us if we have interested them sufficiently to induce them to peruse Professor Ranke's book. We will only caution them against the French translation, a performance which, in our opinion, is just as discreditable to the moral character of the person from whom it proceeds as a false affidavit or a forged bill of exchange would have been, and advise them to study either the original, or the English version in which the sense and spirit of the original are admirably preserved.

LEIGH HUNT. (JANUARY, 1841.)

The Dramatic Works of WYCHERLEY, CONGREVE, VANBRUGH, *and* FARQUHAR, *with Biographical and Critical Notices.* By LEIGH HUNT. 8vo. London: 1840.

WE have a kindness for Mr. Leigh Hunt. We form our judgment of him, indeed, only from events of universal notoriety, from his own works, and from the works of other writers, who have generally abused him in the most rancorous manner. But, unless we are greatly mistaken, he is a very clever, a very honest, and a very good-natured man. We can clearly discern, together with many merits, many faults both in his writings and in his conduct. But we really think that there is hardly a man living whose merits have been so grudgingly allowed, and whose faults have been so cruelly expiated.

In some respects Mr. Leigh Hunt is excellently qualified for the task which he has now undertaken. His style, in spite of its mannerism, nay, partly by reason of its mannerism, is well suited for light, garrulous, desultory *ana*, half critical, half biographical. We do not always agree with his literary judgments; but we find in him what is very rare in our time, the power of justly appreciating and heartily enjoying good things of very different kinds. He can adore Shakspeare and Spenser without denying poetical genius to the author of Alexander's Feast, or fine observation, rich fancy, and exquisite humour to him who imagined Will Honeycomb and Sir Roger de

Coverley. He has paid particular attention to the history of the English drama, from the age of Elizabeth down to our own time, and has every right to be heard with respect on that subject.

The plays to which he now acts as introducer are, with few exceptions, such as, in the opinion of many very respectable people, ought not to be reprinted. In this opinion we can by no means concur. We cannot wish that any work or class of works which has exercised a great influence on the human mind, and which illustrates the character of an important epoch in letters, politics, and morals, should disappear from the world. If we err in this matter, we err with the gravest men and bodies of men in the empire, and especially with the Church of England, and with the great schools of learning which are connected with her. The whole liberal education of our countrymen is conducted on the principle, that no book which is valuable, either by reason of the excellence of its style, or by reason of the light which it throws on the history, polity, and manners of nations, should be withheld from the student on account of its impurity. The Athenian Comedies, in which there are scarcely a hundred lines together without some passage of which Rochester would have been ashamed, have been reprinted at the Pitt Press, and the Clarendon Press, under the direction of syndics and delegates appointed by the Universities, and have been illustrated with notes by reverend, very reverend, and right reverend commentators. Every year the most distinguished young men in the kingdom are examined by bishops and professors of divinity in such works as the Lysistrata of Aristophanes and the Sixth Satire of Juvenal. There is certainly something a little ludicrous in the idea of a conclave of venerable fathers of the church praising and rewarding a lad on account of his intimate acquaintance with writings compared

with which the loosest tale in Prior is modest. But, for our own part, we have no doubt that the great societies which direct the education of the English gentry have herein judged wisely. It is unquestionable that an extensive acquaintance with ancient literature enlarges and enriches the mind. It is unquestionable that a man whose mind has been thus enlarged and enriched is likely to be far more useful to the state and to the church than one who is unskilled, or little skilled, in classical learning. On the other hand, we find it difficult to believe that, in a world so full of temptation as this, any gentleman whose life would have been virtuous if he had not read Aristophanes and Juvenal will be made vicious by reading them. A man who, exposed to all the influences of such a state of society as that in which we live, is yet afraid of exposing himself to the influences of a few Greek or Latin verses, acts, we think, much like the felon who begged the sheriffs to let him have an umbrella held over his head from the door of Newgate to the gallows, because it was a drizzling morning, and he was apt to take cold.

The virtue which the world wants is a healthful virtue, not a valetudinarian virtue, a virtue which can expose itself to the risks inseparable from all spirited exertion, not a virtue which keeps out of the common air for fear of infection, and eschews the common food as too stimulating. It would be indeed absurd to attempt to keep men from acquiring those qualifications which fit them to play their part in life with honour to themselves and advantage to their country, for the sake of preserving a delicacy which cannot be preserved, a delicacy which a walk from Westminster to the Temple is sufficient to destroy.

But we should be justly chargeable with gross inconsistency if, while we defend the policy which invites the youth of our country to study such writers

as Theocritus and Catullus, we were to set up a cry against a new edition of the Country Wife or the Way of the World. The immoral English writers of the seventeenth century are indeed much less excusable than those of Greece and Rome. But the worst English writings of the seventeenth century are decent, compared with much that has been bequeathed to us by Greece and Rome. Plato, we have little doubt, was a much better man than Sir George Etherege. But Plato has written things at which Sir George Etherege would have shuddered. Buckhurst and Sedley, even in those wild orgies at the Cock in Bow Street for which they were pelted by the rabble and fined by the Court of King's Bench, would never have dared to hold such discourse as passed between Socrates and Phædrus on that fine summer day under the plane-tree, while the fountain warbled at their feet, and the cicadas chirped overhead. If it be, as we think it is, desirable that an English gentleman should be well informed touching the government and the manners of little commonwealths which both in place and time are far removed from us, whose independence has been more than two thousand years extinguished, whose language has not been spoken for ages, and whose ancient magnificence is attested only by a few broken columns and friezes, much more must it be desirable that he should be intimately acquainted with the history of the public mind of his own country, and with the causes, the nature, and the extent of those revolutions of opinion and feeling which, during the last two centuries, have alternately raised and depressed the standard of our national morality. And knowledge of this sort is to be very sparingly gleaned from Parliamentary debates, from state papers, and from the works of grave historians. It must either not be acquired at all, or it must be acquired by the perusal of the light literature

which has at various periods been fashionable. We are therefore by no means disposed to condemn this publication, though we certainly cannot recommend the handsome volume before us as an appropriate Christmas present for young ladies.

We have said that we think the present publication perfectly justifiable. But we can by no means agree with Mr. Leigh Hunt, who seems to hold that there is little or no ground for the charge of immorality so often brought against the literature of the Restoration. We do not blame him for not bringing to the judgment-seat the merciless rigour of Lord Angelo: but we really think that such flagitious and impudent offenders as those who are now at the bar deserved at least the gentle rebuke of Escalus. Mr. Leigh Hunt treats the whole matter a little too much in the easy style of Lucio; and perhaps his exceeding lenity disposes us to be somewhat too severe.

And yet it is not easy to be too severe. For in truth this part of our literature is a disgrace to our language and our national character. It is clever, indeed, and very entertaining; but it is, in the most emphatic sense of the words, "earthly, sensual, devilish." Its indecency, though perpetually such as is condemned not less by the rules of good taste than by those of morality, is not, in our opinion, so disgraceful a fault as its singularly inhuman spirit. We have here Belial, not as when he inspired Ovid and Ariosto, "graceful and humane," but with the iron eye and cruel sneer of Mephistophiles. We find ourselves in a world, in which the ladies are like very profligate, impudent, and unfeeling men, and in which the men are too bad for any place but Pandæmonium or Norfolk Island. We are surrounded by foreheads of bronze, hearts like the nether millstone, and tongues set on fire of hell.

Dryden defended or excused his own offences and

those of his contemporaries by pleading the example of the earlier English dramatists; and Mr. Leigh Hunt seems to think that there is force in the plea. We altogether differ from this opinion. The crime charged is not mere coarseness of expression. The terms which are delicate in one age become gross in the next. The diction of the English version of the Pentateuch is sometimes such as Addison would not have ventured to imitate; and Addison, the standard of moral purity in his own age, used many phrases which are now proscribed. Whether a thing shall be designated by a plain noun substantive or by a circumlocution is mere matter of fashion. Morality is not at all interested in the question. But morality is deeply interested in this, that what is immoral shall not be presented to the imagination of the young and susceptible in constant connexion with what is attractive. For every person who has observed the operation of the law of association in his own mind and in the minds of others knows that whatever is constantly presented to the imagination in connexion with what is attractive will itself become attractive. There is undoubtedly a great deal of indelicate writing in Fletcher and Massinger, and more than might be wished even in Ben Jonson and Shakspeare, who are comparatively pure. But it is impossible to trace in their plays any systematic attempt to associate vice with those things which men value most and desire most, and virtue with every thing ridiculous and degrading. And such a systematic attempt we find in the whole dramatic literature of the generation which followed the return of Charles the Second. We will take as an instance of what we mean, a single subject of the highest importance to the happiness of mankind, conjugal fidelity. We can at present hardly call to mind a single English play, written before the civil war, in

which the character of a seducer of married women is represented in a favourable light. We remember many plays in which such persons are baffled, exposed, covered with derision, and insulted by triumphant husbands. Such is the fate of Falstaff, with all his wit and knowledge of the world. Such is the fate of Brisac in Fletcher's Elder Brother, and of Ricardo and Ubaldo in Massinger's Picture. Sometimes, as in the Fatal Dowry and Love's Cruelty, the outraged honour of families is repaired by a bloody revenge. If now and then the lover is represented as an accomplished man, and the husband as a person of weak or odious character, this only makes the triumph of female virtue the more signal, as in Jonson's Celia and Mrs. Fitzdottrel, and in Fletcher's Maria. In general we will venture to say that the dramatists of the age of Elizabeth and James the First either treat the breach of the marriage-vow as a serious crime, or, if they treat it as matter for laughter, turn the laugh against the gallant.

On the contrary, during the forty years which followed the Restoration, the whole body of the dramatists invariably represent adultery, we do not say as a peccadillo, we do not say as an error which the violence of passion may excuse, but as the calling of a fine gentleman, as a grace without which his character would be imperfect. It is as essential to his breeding and to his place in society that he should make love to the wives of his neighbours as that he should know French, or that he should have a sword at his side. In all this there is no passion, and scarcely any thing that can be called preference. The hero intrigues just as he wears a wig; because, if he did not, he would be a queer fellow, a city prig, perhaps a Puritan. All the agreeable qualities are always given to the gallant. All the contempt and aversion are the portion of the unfortunate husband.

Take Dryden for example; and compare Woodall with Brainsick, or Lorenzo with Gomez. Take Wycherley; and compare Horner with Pinchwife. Take Vanbrugh; and compare Constant with Sir John Brute. Take Farquhar; and compare Archer with Squire Sullen. Take Congreve; and compare Bellmour with Fondlewife, Careless with Sir Paul Plyant, or Scandal with Foresight. In all these cases, and in many more which might be named, the dramatist evidently does his best to make the person who commits the injury graceful, sensible, and spirited, and the person who suffers it a fool, or a tyrant, or both.

Mr. Charles Lamb, indeed, attempted to set up a defence for this way of writing. The dramatists of the latter part of the seventeenth century are not, according to him, to be tried by the standard of morality which exists, and ought to exist, in real life. Their world is a conventional world. Their heroes and heroines belong, not to England, not to Christendom, but to an Utopia of gallantry, to a Fairyland, where the Bible and Burn's Justice are unknown, where a prank which on this earth would be rewarded with the pillory is merely matter for a peal of elvish laughter. A real Horner, a real Careless, would, it is admitted, be exceedingly bad men. But to predicate morality or immorality of the Horner of Wycherley and the Careless of Congreve is as absurd as it would be to arraign a sleeper for his dreams. "They belong to the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns. When we are among them we are among a chaotic people. We are not to judge them by our usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings, for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated, for no family ties exist among them. There is neither right nor wrong, gratitude or its opposite, claim or duty, paternity or sonship."

This is, we believe, a fair summary of Mr. Lamb's doctrine. We are sure that we do not wish to represent him unfairly. For we admire his genius; we love the kind nature which appears in all his writings: and we cherish his memory as much as if we had known him personally. But we must plainly say that his argument, though ingenious, is altogether sophistical.

Of course we perfectly understand that it is possible for a writer to create a conventional world in which things forbidden by the Decalogue and the Statute Book shall be lawful, and yet that the exhibition may be harmless, or even edifying. For example, we suppose that the most austere critics would not accuse Fenelon of impiety and immorality on account of his Telemachus and his Dialogues of the Dead. In Telemachus and the Dialogues of the Dead we have a false religion, and consequently a morality which is in some points incorrect. We have a right and a wrong differing from the right and the wrong of real life. It is represented as the first duty of men to pay honour to Jove and Minerva. Philocles, who employs his leisure in making graven images of these deities, is extolled for his piety in a way which contrasts singularly with the expressions of Isaiah on the same subject. The dead are judged by Minos, and rewarded with lasting happiness for actions which Fenelon would have been the first to pronounce splendid sins. The same may be said of Mr. Southey's Mahommedan and Hindoo heroes and heroines. In Thalaba, to speak in derogation of the Arabian impostor is blasphemy: to drink wine is a crime: to perform ablutions and to pay honour to the holy cities are works of merit. In the Curse of Kehama, Kailyal is commended for her devotion to the statue of Mariataly, the goddess of the poor. But certainly no person will accuse

Mr. Southey of having promoted or intended to promote either Islamism or Brahminism.

It is easy to see why the conventional worlds of Fenelon and Mr. Southey are unobjectionable. In the first place, they are utterly unlike the real world in which we live. The state of society, the laws even of the physical world, are so different from those with which we are familiar, that we cannot be shocked at finding the morality also very different. But in truth the morality of these conventional worlds differs from the morality of the real world only in points where there is no danger that the real world will ever go wrong. The generosity and docility of Telemachus, the fortitude, the modesty, the filial tenderness of Kailyal, are virtues of all ages and nations. And there was very little danger that the Dauphin would worship Minerva, or that an English damsel would dance, with a bucket on her head, before the statue of Mariataly.

The case is widely different with what Mr. Charles Lamb calls the conventional world of Wycherley and Congreve. Here the garb, the manners, the topics of conversation are those of the real town and of the passing day. The hero is in all superficial accomplishments exactly the fine gentleman whom every youth in the pit would gladly resemble. The heroine is the fine lady whom every youth in the pit would gladly marry. The scene is laid in some place which is as well known to the audience as their own houses, in St. James's Park, or Hyde Park, or Westminster Hall. The lawyer bustles about with his bag, between the Common Pleas and the Exchequer. The Peer calls for his carriage to go to the House of Lords on a private bill. A hundred little touches are employed to make the fictitious world appear like the actual world. And the immorality is of a sort which never can be out of date, and which all

the force of religion, law, and public opinion united can but imperfectly restrain.

In the name of art, as well as in the name of virtue, we protest against the principle that the world of pure comedy is one into which no moral enters. If comedy be an imitation, under whatever conventions, of real life, how is it possible that it can have no reference to the great rule which directs life, and to feelings which are called forth by every incident of life? If what Mr. Charles Lamb says were correct, the inference would be that these dramatists did not in the least understand the very first principles of their craft. Pure landscape-painting into which no light or shade enters, pure portrait-painting into which no expression enters, are phrases less at variance with sound criticism than pure comedy into which no moral enters.

But it is not the fact that the world of these dramatists is a world into which no moral enters. Morality constantly enters into that world, a sound morality, and an unsound morality; the sound morality to be insulted, derided, associated with every thing mean and hateful; the unsound morality to be set off to every advantage, and inculcated by all methods, direct and indirect. It is not the fact that none of the inhabitants of this conventional world feel reverence for sacred institutions and family ties. Fondlewife, Pinchwife, every person in short of narrow understanding and disgusting manners, expresses that reverence strongly. The heroes and heroines, too, have a moral code of their own, an exceedingly bad one, but not, as Mr. Charles Lamb seems to think, a code existing only in the imagination of dramatists. It is, on the contrary, a code actually received and obeyed by great numbers of people. We need not go to Utopia or Fairyland to find them. They are near at hand. Every night some of them cheat at the hells

in the Quadrant, and others pace the Piazza in Covent Garden. Without flying to Nephelococcygia or to the Court of Queen Mab, we can meet with sharpers, bullies, hard-hearted impudent debauchees, and women worthy of such paramours. The morality of the Country Wife and the Old Bachelor is the morality, not, as Mr. Charles Lamb maintains, of an unreal world, but of a world which is a great deal too real. It is the morality, not of a chaotic people, but of low town-rakes, and of those ladies whom the newspapers call "dashing Cyprians." And the question is simply this, whether a man of genius who constantly and systematically endeavours to make this sort of character attractive, by uniting it with beauty, grace, dignity, spirit, a high social position, popularity, literature, wit, taste, knowledge of the world, brilliant success in every undertaking, does or does not make an ill use of his powers. We own that we are unable to understand how this question can be answered in any way but one.

It must, indeed, be acknowledged, in justice to the writers of whom we have spoken thus severely, that they were, to a great extent, the creatures of their age. And if it be asked why that age encouraged immorality which no other age would have tolerated, we have no hesitation in answering that this great depravation of the national taste was the effect of the prevalence of Puritanism under the Commonwealth.

To punish public outrages on morals and religion is unquestionably within the competence of rulers. But when a government, not content with requiring decency, requires sanctity, it oversteps the bounds which mark its proper functions. And it may be laid down as a universal rule that a government which attempts more than it ought will perform less. A lawgiver who, in order to protect distressed borrowers,

limits the rate of interest, either makes it impossible for the objects of his care to borrow at all, or places them at the mercy of the worst class of usurers. A lawgiver who, from tenderness for labouring men, fixes the hours of their work and the amount of their wages, is certain to make them far more wretched than he found them. And so a government which, not content with repressing scandalous excesses, demands from its subjects fervent and austere piety, will soon discover that, while attempting to render an impossible service to the cause of virtue, it has in truth only promoted vice.

For what are the means by which a government can effect its ends? Two only, reward and punishment; powerful means, indeed, for influencing the exterior act, but altogether impotent for the purpose of touching the heart. A public functionary who is told that he will be promoted if he is a devout Catholic, and turned out of his place if he is not, will probably go to mass every morning, exclude meat from his table on Fridays, shrive himself regularly, and perhaps let his superiors know that he wears a hair shirt next his skin. Under a Puritan government, a person who is apprised that piety is essential to thriving in the world will be strict in the observance of the Sunday, or, as he will call it, Sabbath, and will avoid a theatre as if it were plague-stricken. Such a show of religion as this the hope of gain and the fear of loss will produce, at a week's notice, in any abundance which a government may require. But under this show, sensuality, ambition, avarice, and hatred retain unimpaired power, and the seeming convert has only added to the vices of a man of the world all the still darker vices which are engendered by the constant practice of dissimulation. The truth cannot be long concealed. The public discovers that the grave persons who are proposed to it as patterns

are more utterly destitute of moral principle and of moral sensibility than avowed libertines. It sees that these Pharisees are farther removed from real goodness than publicans and harlots. And, as usual, it rushes to the extreme opposite to that which it quits. It considers a high religious profession as a sure mark of meanness and depravity. On the very first day on which the restraint of fear is taken away, and on which men can venture to say what they think, a frightful peal of blasphemy and ribaldry proclaims that the short-sighted policy which aimed at making a nation of saints has made a nation of scoffers.

It was thus in France about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Louis the Fourteenth in his old age became religious: he determined that his subjects should be religious too: he shrugged his shoulders and knitted his brows if he observed at his levee or near his dinner-table any gentleman who neglected the duties enjoined by the church, and rewarded piety with blue ribands, invitations to Marli, governments, pensions, and regiments. Forthwith Versailles became, in every thing but dress, a convent. The pulpits and confessionals were surrounded by swords and embroidery. The Marshals of France were much in prayer; and there was hardly one among the Dukes and Peers who did not carry good little books in his pocket, fast during Lent, and communicate at Easter. Madame de Maintenon, who had a great share in the blessed work, boasted that devotion had become quite the fashion. A fashion indeed it was; and like a fashion it passed away. No sooner had the old king been carried to St. Denis than the whole court unmasked. Every man hastened to indemnify himself, by the excess of licentiousness and impudence, for years of mortification. The same persons who, a few months before, with meek

voices and demure looks, had consulted divines about the state of their souls, now surrounded the midnight table where, amidst the bounding of champagne corks, a drunken prince, enthroned between Dubois and Madame de Parabère, hiccoughed out atheistical arguments and obscene jests. The early part of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth had been a time of license; but the most dissolute men of that generation would have blushed at the orgies of the Regency.

It was the same with our fathers in the time of the Great Civil War. We are by no means unmindful of the great debt which mankind owes to the Puritans of that time, the deliverers of England, the founders of the American Commonwealths. But in the day of their power, those men committed one great fault, which left deep and lasting traces in the national character and manners. They mistook the end and overrated the force of government. They determined, not merely to protect religion and public morals from insult, an object for which the civil sword, in discreet hands, may be beneficially employed, but to make the people committed to their rule truly devout. Yet, if they had only reflected on events which they had themselves witnessed and in which they had themselves borne a great part, they would have seen what was likely to be the result of their enterprise. They had lived under a government which, during a long course of years, did all that could be done, by lavish bounty and by rigorous punishment, to enforce conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. No person suspected of hostility to that church had the smallest chance of obtaining favour at the court of Charles. Avowed dissent was punished by imprisonment, by ignominious exposure, by cruel mutilations, and by ruinous fines. And the event had been that the

Church had fallen, and had, in its fall, dragged down with it a monarchy which had stood six hundred years. The Puritan might have learned, if from nothing else, yet from his own recent victory, that governments which attempt things beyond their reach are likely not merely to fail, but to produce an effect directly the opposite of that which they contemplate as desirable.

All this was overlooked. The saints were to inherit the earth. The theatres were closed. The fine arts were placed under absurd restraints. Vices which had never before been even misdemeanors were made capital felonies. It was solemnly resolved by Parliament "that no person shall be employed but such as the House shall be satisfied of his real godliness." The pious assembly had a Bible lying on the table for reference. If they had consulted it they might have learned that the wheat and the tares grow together inseparably, and must either be spared together or rooted up together. To know whether a man was really godly was impossible. But it was easy to know whether he had a plain dress, lank hair, no starch in his linen, no gay furniture in his house; whether he talked through his nose, and showed the whites of his eyes; whether he named his children Assurance, Tribulation, and Maher-shalal-hash-baz; whether he avoided Spring Garden when in town, and abstained from hunting and hawking when in the country; whether he expounded hard scriptures to his troop of dragoons, and talked in a committee of ways and means about seeking the Lord. These were tests which could easily be applied. The misfortune was that they were tests which proved nothing. Such as they were, they were employed by the dominant party. And the consequence was that a crowd of impostors, in every walk of life, began to mimic and to caricature what were then regarded as the

outward signs of sanctity. The nation was not duped. The restraints of that gloomy time were such as would have been impatiently borne, if imposed by men who were universally believed to be saints. Those restraints became altogether insupportable when they were known to be kept up for the profit of hypocrites. It is quite certain that, even if the royal family had never returned, even if Richard Cromwell or Henry Cromwell had been at the head of the administration, there would have been a great relaxation of manners. Before the Restoration many signs indicated that a period of license was at hand. The Restoration crushed for a time the Puritan party, and placed supreme power in the hands of a libertine. The political counter-revolution assisted the moral counter-revolution, and was in turn assisted by it. A period of wild and desperate dissoluteness followed. Even in remote manor-houses and hamlets the change was in some degree felt; but in London the outbreak of debauchery was appalling; and in London the places most deeply infected were the Palace, the quarters inhabited by the aristocracy, and the Inns of Court. It was on the support of these parts of the town that the playhouses depended. The character of the drama became conformed to the character of its patrons. The comic poet was the mouthpiece of the most deeply corrupted part of a corrupted society. And in the plays before us we find, distilled and condensed, the essential spirit of the fashionable world during the Anti-puritan reaction.

The Puritan had affected formality; the comic poet laughed at decorum. The Puritan had frowned at innocent diversions; the comic poet took under his patronage the most flagitious excesses. The Puritan had canted; the comic poet blasphemed.

The Puritan had made an affair of gallantry felony without benefit of clergy; the comic poet represented it as an honourable distinction. The Puritan spoke with disdain of the low standard of popular morality; his life was regulated by a far more rigid code; his virtue was sustained by motives unknown to men of the world. Unhappily it had been amply proved in many cases, and might well be suspected in many more, that these high pretensions were unfounded. Accordingly, the fashionable circles, and the comic poets who were the spokesmen of those circles, took up the notion that all professions of piety and integrity were to be construed by the rule of contrary; that it might well be doubted whether there was such a thing as virtue in the world; but that, at all events, a person who affected to be better than his neighbours was sure to be a knave.

In the old drama there had been much that was reprehensible. But whoever compares even the least decorous plays of Fletcher with those contained in the volume before us will see how much the profligacy which follows a period of overstrained austerity goes beyond the profligacy which precedes such a period. The nation resembled the demoniac in the New Testament. The Puritans boasted that the unclean spirit was cast out. The house was empty, swept, and garnished; and for a time the expelled tenant wandered through dry places seeking rest and finding none. But the force of the exorcism was spent. The fiend returned to his abode; and returned not alone. He took to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself. They entered in, and dwelt together: and the second possession was worse than the first.

We will now, as far as our limits will permit, pass in review the writers to whom Mr. Leigh Hunt has introduced us. Of the four, Wycherley stands, we

think, last in literary merit, but first in order of time, and first, beyond all doubt, in immorality.

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY was born in 1640. He was the son of a Shropshire gentleman of old family, and of what was then accounted a good estate. The property was estimated at six hundred a year, a fortune which, among the fortunes at that time, probably ranked as a fortune of two thousand a year would rank in our days.

William was an infant when the civil war broke out; and while he was still in his rudiments, a Presbyterian hierarchy and a republican government were established on the ruins of the ancient church and throne. Old Mr. Wycherley was attached to the royal cause and was not disposed to entrust the education of his heir to the solemn Puritans who now ruled the universities and public schools. Accordingly the young gentleman was sent at fifteen to France. He resided some time in the neighbourhood of the Duke of Montausier, chief of one of the noblest families of Touraine. The Duke's wife, a daughter of the house of Rambouillet, was a finished specimen of those talents and accomplishments for which her race was celebrated. The young foreigner was introduced to the splendid circle which surrounded the duchess, and there he appears to have learned some good and some evil. In a few years he returned to his country a fine gentleman and a Papist. His conversion, it may safely be affirmed, was the effect, not of any strong impression on his understanding or feelings, but partly of intercourse with an agreeable society in which the Church of Rome was the fashion, and partly of that aversion to Calvinistic austerities which was then almost universal among young Englishmen of parts and spirit, and which, at one time, seemed likely to make one half of them Catholics, and the other half Atheists.

But the Restoration came. The universities were again in loyal hands; and there was reason to hope that there would be again a national church fit for a gentleman. Wycherley became a member of Queen's College, Oxford, and abjured the errors of the Church of Rome. The somewhat equivocal glory of turning, for a short time, a good-for-nothing Papist into a good-for-nothing Protestant is ascribed to Bishop Barlow.

Wycherley left Oxford without taking a degree, and entered at the Temple, where he lived gaily for some years, observing the humours of the town, enjoying its pleasures, and picking up just as much law as was necessary to make the character of a petti-fogging attorney or of a litigious client entertaining in a comedy.

From an early age he had been in the habit of amusing himself by writing. Some wretched lines of his on the Restoration are still extant. Had he devoted himself to the making of verses, he would have been nearly as far below Tate and Blackmore as Tate and Blackmore are below Dryden. His only chance for renown would have been that he might have occupied a niche in a satire, between Flecknoe and Settle. There was, however, another kind of composition in which his talents and acquirements qualified him to succeed; and to that he judiciously betook himself.

In his old age he used to say that he wrote Love in a Wood at nineteen, the Gentleman Dancing-Master at twenty-one, the Plain Dealer at twenty-five, and the Country Wife at one or two and thirty. We are incredulous, we own, as to the truth of this story. Nothing that we know of Wycherley leads us to think him incapable of sacrificing truth to vanity. And his memory in the decline of his life played him such strange tricks that we might question the correctness

of his assertion without throwing any imputation on his veracity. It is certain that none of his plays was acted till 1672, when he gave Love in a Wood to the public. It seems improbable that he should resolve on so important an occasion as that of a first appearance before the world, to run his chance with a feeble piece, written before his talents were ripe, before his style was formed, before he had looked abroad into the world; and this when he had actually in his desk two highly finished plays, the fruit of his matured powers. When we look minutely at the pieces themselves, we find in every part of them reason to suspect the accuracy of Wycherley's statement. In the first scene of Love in a Wood, to go no further, we find many passages which he could not have written when he was nineteen. There is an allusion to gentlemen's periwigs, which first came into fashion in 1663; an allusion to guineas, which were first struck in 1663; an allusion to the vests which Charles ordered to be worn at court in 1666; an allusion to the fire of 1666; and several political allusions which must be assigned to times later than the year of the Restoration, to times when the government and the city were opposed to each other, and when the Presbyterian ministers had been driven from the parish churches to the conventicles. But it is needless to dwell on particular expressions. The whole air and spirit of the piece belong to a period subsequent to that mentioned by Wycherley. As to the Plain Dealer, which is said to have been written when he was twenty-five, it contains one scene unquestionably written after 1675, several which are later than 1668, and scarcely a line which can have been composed before the end of 1666.

Whatever may have been the age at which Wycherley composed his plays, it is certain that he did not bring them before the public till he was

upwards of thirty. In 1672, Love in a Wood was acted with more success than it deserved, and this event produced a great change in the fortunes of the author. The Duchess of Cleveland cast her eyes upon him, and was pleased with his appearance. This abandoned woman, not content with her complaisant husband and her royal keeper, lavished her fondness on a crowd of paramours of all ranks, from dukes to rope-dancers. In the time of the commonwealth she commenced her career of gallantry, and terminated it under Anne, by marrying, when a great-grandmother, that worthless fop, Beau Fielding. It is not strange that she should have regarded Wycherley with favour. His figure was commanding, his countenance strikingly handsome, his look and deportment full of grace and dignity. He had, as Pope said long after, "the true nobleman look," the look which seems to indicate superiority, and a not unbecoming consciousness of superiority. His hair indeed, as he says in one of his poems, was prematurely grey. But in that age of periwigs this misfortune was of little importance. The Duchess admired him, and proceeded to make love to him, after the fashion of the coarse-minded and shameless circle to which she belonged. In the Ring, when the crowd of beauties and fine gentlemen was thickest, she put her head out of her coach-window, and bawled to him, "Sir, you are a rascal; you are a villain;" and, if she is not belied, she added another phrase of abuse which we will not quote, but of which we may say that it might most justly have been applied to her own children. Wycherley called on her Grace the next day, and with great humility begged to know in what way he had been so unfortunate as to disoblige her. Thus began an intimacy from which the poet probably expected wealth and honours. Nor were such expectations unreasonable.

A handsome young fellow about the court, known by the name of Jack Churchill, was, about the same time, so lucky as to become the object of a short-lived fancy of the Duchess. She had presented him with five thousand pounds, the price, in all probability, of some title or pardon. The prudent youth had lent the money on high interest and on landed security; and this judicious investment was the beginning of the most splendid private fortune in Europe. Wycherley was not so lucky. The partiality with which the great lady regarded him was indeed the talk of the whole town; and sixty years later old men who remembered those days told Voltaire that she often stole from the court to her lover's chambers in the Temple, disguised like a country girl, with a straw-hat on her head, pattens on her feet, and a basket in her hand. The poet was indeed too happy and proud to be discreet. He dedicated to the Duchess the play which had led to their acquaintance, and in the dedication expressed himself in terms which could not but confirm the reports which had gone abroad. But at Whitehall such an affair was regarded in no serious light. The lady was not afraid to bring Wycherley to court, and to introduce him to a splendid society with which, as far as appears, he had never before mixed. The easy king, who allowed to his mistresses the same liberty which he claimed for himself, was pleased with the conversation and manners of his new rival. So high did Wycherley stand in the royal favour that once, when he was confined by a fever to his lodgings in Bow Street, Charles, who, with all his faults, was certainly a man of social and affable disposition, called on him, sat by his bed, advised him to try change of air, and gave him a handsome sum of money to defray the expense of a journey. Buckingham, then Master of the Horse, and one of that infamous ministry known by the

name of the Cabal, had been one of the Duchess's innumerable paramours. He at first showed some symptoms of jealousy; but he soon, after his fashion, veered round from anger to fondness, and gave Wycherley a commission in his own regiment and a place in the royal household.

It would be unjust to Wycherley's memory not to mention here the only good action, as far as we know, of his whole life. He is said to have made great exertions to obtain the patronage of Buckingham for the illustrious author of Hudibras, who was now sinking into an obscure grave, neglected by a nation proud of his genius, and by a court which he had served too well. His Grace consented to see poor Butler; and an appointment was made. But unhappily two pretty women passed by; the volatile Duke ran after them; the opportunity was lost, and could never be regained.

The second Dutch war, the most disgraceful war in the whole history of England, was now raging. It was not in that age considered as by any means necessary that a naval officer should receive a professional education. Young men of rank, who were hardly able to keep their feet in a breeze, served on board of the King's ships, sometimes with commissions, and sometimes as volunteers. Mulgrave, Dorset, Rochester, and many others, left the playhouses and the Mall for hammocks and salt pork, and, ignorant as they were of the rudiments of naval service, showed, at least, on the day of battle, the courage which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman. All good judges of maritime affairs complained that, under this system, the ships were grossly mismanaged, and that the tarpaulins contracted the vices, without acquiring the graces, of the court. But on this subject, as on every other where the interests or whims of favourites were concerned, the government of Charles was deaf

to all remonstrances. Wycherley did not choose to be out of the fashion. He embarked, was present at a battle, and celebrated it, on his return, in a copy of verses too bad for the bellman.[1]

About the same time, he brought on the stage his second piece, the Gentleman Dancing-Master. The biographers say nothing, as far as we remember, about the fate of this play. There is, however, reason to believe that, though certainly far superior to Love in a Wood, it was not equally successful. It was first tried at the west end of the town, and, as the poet confessed, "would scarce do there." It was then performed in Salisbury Court, but, as it should seem, with no better event. For, in the prologue to the Country Wife, Wycherley described himself as "the late so baffled scribbler."

In 1675, the Country Wife was performed with brilliant success, which, in a literary point of view, was not wholly unmerited. For, though one of the most profligate and heartless of human compositions, it is the elaborate production of a mind, not indeed rich, original, or imaginative, but ingenious, observant, quick to seize hints, and patient of the toil of polishing.

[1] Mr. Leigh Hunt supposes that the battle at which Wycherley was present was that which the Duke of York gained over Opdam, in 1665. We believe that it was one of the battles between Rupert and De Ruyter, in 1673.

The point is of no importance; and there cannot be said to be much evidence either way. We offer, however, to Mr. Leigh Hunt's consideration three arguments, of no great weight certainly, yet such as ought, we think, to prevail in the absence of better. First, it is not very likely that a young Templar, quite unknown in the world,—and Wycherley was such in 1665,—should have quitted his chambers to go to sea. On the other hand, it would be in the regular course of things, that, when a courtier and an equerry, he should offer his services. Secondly, his verses appear to have been written after a drawn battle, like those of 1673, and not after a complete victory, like that of 1665. Thirdly, in the epilogue to the Gentleman Dancing-Master, written in 1673, he says that "all gentlemen must pack to sea;" an expression which makes it probable that he did not himself mean to stay behind.

The Plain Dealer, equally immoral and equally well written, appeared in 1677. At first this piece pleased the people less than the critics; but after a time its unquestionable merits and the zealous support of Lord Dorset, whose influence in literary and fashionable society was unbounded, established it in the public favour,

The fortune of Wycherley was now in the zenith, and began to decline. A long life was still before him. But it was destined to be filled with nothing but shame and wretchedness, domestic dissensions, literary failures, and pecuniary embarrassments.

The King, who was looking about for an accomplished man to conduct the education of his natural son, the young Duke of Richmond, at length fixed on Wycherley. The poet, exulting in his good luck, went down to amuse himself at Tunbridge Wells, looked into a bookseller's shop on the Pantiles, and, to his great delight, heard a handsome woman ask for the Plain Dealer which had just been published. He made acquaintance with the lady, who proved to be the Countess of Drogheda, a gay young widow, with an ample jointure. She was charmed with his person and his wit, and, after a short flirtation, agreed to become his wife. Wycherley seems to have been apprehensive that this connexion might not suit well with the King's plans respecting the Duke of Richmond. He accordingly prevailed on the lady to consent to a private marriage. All came out. Charles thought the conduct of Wycherley both disrespectful and disingenuous. Other causes probably assisted to alienate the sovereign from the subject who had lately been so highly favoured. Buckingham was now in opposition, and had been committed to the Tower; not, as Mr. Leigh Hunt supposes, on a charge of treason, but by an order of the House of Lords for some expressions which he had used in debate. Wycherley

wrote some bad lines in praise of his imprisoned patron, which, if they came to the knowledge of the King, would certainly have made his majesty very angry. The favour of the court was completely withdrawn from the poet. An amiable woman with a large fortune might indeed have been an ample compensation for the loss. But Lady Drogheda was ill-tempered, imperious, and extravagantly jealous. She had herself been a maid of honour at Whitehall. She well knew in what estimation conjugal fidelity was held among the fine gentlemen there, and watched her town husband as assiduously as Mr. Pinchwife watched his country wife. The unfortunate wit was, indeed, allowed to meet his friends at a tavern opposite to his own house. But on such occasions the windows were always open, in order that her Ladyship, who was posted on the other side of the street, might be satisfied that no woman was of the party.

The death of Lady Drogheda released the poet from this distress; but a series of disasters, in rapid succession, broke down his health, his spirits, and his fortune. His wife meant to leave him a good property, and left him only a lawsuit. His father could not or would not assist him. Wycherley was at length thrown into the Fleet, and languished there during seven years, utterly forgotten, as it should seem, by the gay and lively circle of which he had been a distinguished ornament. In the extremity of his distress he implored the publisher who had been enriched by the sale of his works to lend him twenty pounds, and was refused. His comedies, however, still kept possession of the stage, and drew great audiences which troubled themselves little about the situation of the author. At length James the Second, who had now succeeded to the throne, happened to go to the theatre on an evening when the Plain Dealer was acted. He was pleased by the performance, and

touched by the fate of the writer, whom he probably remembered as one of the gayest and handsomest of his brother's courtiers. The King determined to pay Wycherley's debts, and to settle on the unfortunate poet a pension of two hundred pounds a year. This munificence on the part of a prince who was little in the habit of rewarding literary merit, and whose whole soul was devoted to the interests of his church, raises in us a surmise which Mr. Leigh Hunt will, we fear, pronounce very uncharitable. We cannot help suspecting that it was at this time that Wycherley returned to the communion of the Church of Rome. That he did return to the communion of the Church of Rome is certain. The date of his reconversion, as far as we know, has never been mentioned by any biographer. We believe that, if we place it at this time, we do no injustice to the character either of Wycherley or James.

Not long after, old Mr. Wycherley died; and his son, now past the middle of life, came to the family estate. Still, however, he was not at his ease. His embarrassments were great: his property was strictly tied up; and he was on very bad terms with the heir-at-law. He appears to have led, during a long course of years, that most wretched life, the life of a vicious old boy about town. Expensive tastes with little money, and licentious appetites with declining vigour, were the just penance for his early irregularities. A severe illness had produced a singular effect on his intellect. His memory played him pranks stranger than almost any that are to be found in the history of that strange faculty. It seemed to be at once preternaturally strong and preternaturally weak. If a book was read to him before he went to bed, he would wake the next morning with his mind full of the thoughts and expressions which he had heard over night; and he would write them down,

without in the least suspecting that they were not his own. In his verses the same ideas, and even the same words, came over and over again several times in a short composition. His fine person bore the marks of age, sickness, and sorrow; and he mourned for his departed beauty with an effeminate regret. He could not look without a sigh at the portrait which Lely had painted of him when he was only twenty-eight, and often murmured, *Quantum mutatus ab illo.* He was still nervously anxious about his literary reputation, and not content with the fame which he still possessed as a dramatist, was determined to be renowned as a satirist and an amatory poet. In 1704, after twenty-seven years of silence, he again appeared as an author. He put forth a large folio of miscellaneous verses, which, we believe, has never been reprinted. Some of these pieces had probably circulated through the town in manuscript. For, before the volume appeared, the critics at the coffee-houses very confidently predicted that it would be utterly worthless, and were in consequence bitterly reviled by the poet in an ill-written, foolish, and egotistical preface. The book amply vindicated the most unfavourable prophecies that had been hazarded. The style and versification are beneath criticism; the morals are those of Rochester. For Rochester, indeed, there was some excuse. When his offences against decorum were committed, he was a very young man, misled by a prevailing fashion. Wycherley was sixty-four. He had long outlived the times when libertinism was regarded as essential to the character of a wit and a gentleman. Most of the rising poets, Addison, for example, John Philips, and Rowe, were studious of decency. We can hardly conceive anything more miserable than the figure which the ribald old man makes in the midst of so many sober and well-conducted youths.

In the very year in which this bulky volume of obscene doggerel was published, Wycherley formed an acquaintance of a very singular kind. A little, pale, crooked, sickly, bright-eyed urchin, just turned of sixteen, had written some copies of verses in which discerning judges could detect the promise of future eminence. There was, indeed, as yet nothing very striking or original in the conceptions of the young poet. But he was already skilled in the art of metrical composition. His diction and his music were not those of the great old masters; but that which his ablest contemporaries were labouring to do he already did best. His style was not richly poetical; but it was always neat, compact, and pointed. His verse wanted variety of pause, of swell, and of cadence, but never grated harshly on the ear, or disappointed it by a feeble close. The youth was already free of the company of wits, and was greatly elated at being introduced to the author of the Plain Dealer and the Country Wife.

It is curious to trace the history of the intercourse which took place between Wycherley and Pope, between the representative of the age that was going out and the representative of the age that was coming in, between the friend of Rochester and Buckingham, and the friend of Lyttelton and Mansfield. At first the boy was enchanted by the kindness and condescension of so eminent a writer, haunted his door, and followed him about like a spaniel from coffee-house to coffee-house. Letters full of affection, humility, and fulsome flattery were interchanged between the friends. But the first ardour of affection could not last. Pope, though at no time scrupulously delicate in his writings or fastidious as to the morals of his associates, was shocked by the indecency of a rake who, at seventy, was still the representative of the monstrous profligacy of the Restoration. As the

youth grew older, as his mind expanded and his fame rose, he appreciated both himself and Wycherley more correctly. He felt a just contempt for the old gentleman's verses, and was at no great pains to conceal his opinion. Wycherley, on the other hand, though blinded by self-love to the imperfections of what he called his poetry, could not but see that there was an immense difference between his young companion's rhymes and his own. He was divided between two feelings. He wished to have the assistance of so skilful a hand to polish his lines; and yet he shrank from the humiliation of being beholden for literary assistance to a lad who might have been his grandson. Pope was willing to give assistance, but was by no means disposed to give assistance and flattery too. He took the trouble to retouch whole reams of feeble stumbling verses, and inserted many vigorous lines which the least skilful reader will distinguish in an instant. But he thought that by these services he acquired a right to express himself in terms which would not, under ordinary circumstances, become one who was addressing a man of four times his age. In one letter, he tells Wycherley that "the worst pieces are such as, to render them very good, would require almost the entire new writing of them." In another, he gives the following account of his corrections: "Though the whole be as short again as at first, there is not one thought omitted but what is a repetition of something in your first volume, or in this very paper; and the versification throughout is, I believe, such as nobody can be shocked at. The repeated permission you give me of dealing freely with you, will, I hope, excuse what I have done; for, if I have not spared you when I thought severity would do you a kindness, I have not mangled you where I thought there was no absolute need of amputation."

Wycherley continued to return thanks for all this hacking and hewing, which was, indeed, of inestimable service to his compositions. But at last his thanks began to sound very like reproaches. In private, he is said to have described Pope as a person who could not cut out a suit, but who had some skill in turning old coats. In his letters to Pope, while he acknowledged that the versification of the poems had been greatly improved, he spoke of the whole art of versification with scorn, and sneered at those who preferred sound to sense. Pope revenged himself for this outbreak of spleen by return of post. He had in his hands a volume of Wycherley's rhymes, and he wrote to say that this volume was so full of faults that he could not correct it without completely defacing the manuscript. "I am," he said, "equally afraid of sparing you, and of offending you by too impudent a correction." This was more than flesh and blood could bear. Wycherley reclaimed his papers, in a letter in which resentment shows itself plainly through the thin disguise of civility. Pope, glad to be rid of a troublesome and inglorious task, sent back the deposit, and, by way of a parting courtesy, advised the old man to turn his poetry into prose, and assured him that the public would like his thoughts much better without his versification. Thus ended this memorable correspondence.

Wycherley lived some years after the termination of the strange friendship which we have described. The last scene of his life was, perhaps, the most scandalous. Ten days before his death, at seventy-five, he married a young girl, merely in order to injure his nephew, an act which proves that neither years, nor adversity, nor what he called his philosophy, nor either of the religions which he had at different times professed, had taught him the rudiments of morality.

He died in December, 1715, and lies in the vault under the church of St. Paul in Covent-Garden.

His bride soon after married a Captain Shrimpton, who thus became possessed of a large collection of manuscripts. These were sold to a bookseller. They were so full of erasures and interlineations that no printer could decipher them. It was necessary to call in the aid of a professed critic; and Theobald, the editor of Shakspeare, and the hero of the first Dunciad, was employed to ascertain the true reading. In this way a volume of miscellanies in verse and prose was got up for the market. The collection derives all its value from the traces of Pope's hand, which are every where discernible.

Of the moral character of Wycherley it can hardly be necessary for us to say more. His fame as a writer rests wholly on his comedies, and chiefly on the last two. Even as a comic writer, he was neither of the best school, nor highest in his school. He was in truth a worse Congreve. His chief merit, like Congreve's, lies in the style of his dialogue. But the wit which lights up the Plain Dealer and the Country Wife is pale and flickering, when compared with the gorgeous blaze which dazzles us almost to blindness in Love for Love and the Way of the World. Like Congreve, and, indeed, even more than Congreve, Wycherley is ready to sacrifice dramatic propriety to the liveliness of his dialogue. The poet speaks out of the mouths of all his dunces and coxcombs, and makes them describe themselves with a good sense and acuteness which puts them on a level with the wits and heroes. We will give two instances, the first which occur to us, from the Country Wife. There are in the world fools who find the society of old friends insipid, and who are always running after new companions. Such a character is a fair subject for comedy. But nothing can be more absurd than

to introduce a man of this sort saying to his comrade, "I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance." That town-wits, again, have always been rather a heartless class, is true. But none of them, we will answer for it, ever said to a young lady to whom he was making love, "We wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts: as we have no affections, so we have no malice."

Wycherley's plays are said to have been the produce of long and patient labour. The epithet of "slow" was early given to him by Rochester, and was frequently repeated. In truth his mind, unless we are greatly mistaken, was naturally a very meagre soil, and was forced only by great labour and outlay to bear fruit which, after all, was not of the highest flavour. He has scarcely more claim to originality than Terence. It is not too much to say that there is hardly any thing of the least value in his plays of which the hint is not to be found elsewhere. The best scenes in the Gentleman Dancing-Master were suggested by Calderon's *Maestro de Danzar*, not by any means one of the happiest comedies of the great Castilian poet. The Country Wife is borrowed from the *École des Maris* and the *École des Femmes*. The groundwork of the Plain Dealer is taken from the *Misanthrope* of Molière. One whole scene is almost translated from the *Critique de l'École des Femmes*. Fidelia is Shakspeare's Viola stolen, and marred in the stealing; and the Widow Blackacre, beyond comparison Wycherley's best comic character, is the Countess in Racine's *Plaideurs*, talking the jargon of English instead of that of French chicane.

The only thing original about Wycherley, the only thing which he could furnish from his own mind in inexhaustible abundance, was profligacy.

It is curious to observe how every thing that he touched, however pure and noble, took in an instant the colour of his own mind. Compare the *École des Femmes* with the Country Wife. Agnes is a simple and amiable girl, whose heart is indeed full of love, but of love sanctioned by honour, morality, and religion. Her natural talents are great. They have been hidden, and, as it might appear, destroyed by an education elaborately bad. But they are called forth into full energy by a virtuous passion. Her lover, while he adores her beauty, is too honest a man to abuse the confiding tenderness of a creature so charming and inexperienced. Wycherley takes this plot into his hands; and forthwith this sweet and graceful courtship becomes a licentious intrigue of the lowest and least sentimental kind, between an impudent London rake and the idiot wife of a country squire. We will not go into details. In truth, Wycherley's indecency is protected against the critics as a skunk is protected against the hunters. It is safe, because it is too filthy to handle, and too noisome even to approach.

It is the same with the Plain Dealer. How careful has Shakspeare been in Twelfth Night to preserve the dignity and delicacy of Viola under her disguise! Even when wearing a page's doublet and hose, she is never mixed up with any transaction which the most fastidious mind could regard as leaving a stain on her. She is employed by the Duke on an embassy of love to Olivia, but on an embassy of the most honourable kind. Wycherley borrows Viola; and Viola forthwith becomes a pandar of the basest sort. But the character of Manly is the best illustration of our meaning. Molière exhibited in his misanthrope a pure and noble mind, which had been sorely vexed by the sight of perfidy and malevolence, disguised

under the forms of politeness. As every extreme naturally generates its contrary, Alceste adopts a standard of good and evil directly opposed to that of the society which surrounds him. Courtesy seems to him a vice; and those stern virtues which are neglected by the fops and coquettes of Paris become too exclusively the objects of his veneration. He is often to blame; he is often ridiculous; but he is always a good man; and the feeling which he inspires is regret that a person so estimable should be so unamiable. Wycherley borrowed Alceste, and turned him,—we quote the words of so lenient a critic as Mr. Leigh Hunt,—into "a ferocious sensualist, who believed himself as great a rascal as he thought every body else." The surliness of Molière's hero is copied and caricatured. But the most nauseous libertinism and the most dastardly fraud are substituted for the purity and integrity of the original. And, to make the whole complete, Wycherley does not seem to have been aware that he was not drawing the portrait of an eminently honest man. So depraved was his moral taste that, while he firmly believed that he was producing a picture of virtue too exalted for the commerce of this world, he was really delineating the greatest rascal that is to be found, even in his own writings.

We pass a very severe censure on Wycherley, when we say that it is a relief to turn from him to Congreve. Congreve's writings, indeed, are by no means pure; nor was he, as far as we are able to judge, a warm-hearted or high-minded man. Yet, in coming to him, we feel that the worst is over, that we are one remove further from the Restoration, that we are past the Nadir of national taste and morality.

WILLIAM CONGREVE was born in 1670, at Bardsey, in the neighbourhood of Leeds. His father, a younger son of a very ancient Staffordshire family,

had distinguished himself among the cavaliers in the civil war, was set down after the Restoration for the Order of the Royal Oak, and subsequently settled in Ireland, under the patronage of the Earl of Burlington.

Congreve passed his childhood and youth in Ireland. He was sent to school at Kilkenny, and thence went to the University of Dublin. His learning does great honour to his instructors. From his writings it appears, not only that he was well acquainted with Latin literature, but that his knowledge of the Greek poets was such as was not, in his time, common even in a college.

When he had completed his academical studies, he was sent to London to study the law, and was entered of the Middle Temple. He troubled himself, however, very little about pleading or conveyancing, and gave himself up to literature and society. Two kinds of ambition early took possession of his mind, and often pulled it in opposite directions. He was conscious of great fertility of thought and power of ingenious combination. His lively conversation, his polished manners, and his highly respectable connexions, had obtained for him ready access to the best company. He longed to be a great writer. He longed to be a man of fashion. Either object was within his reach. But could he secure both? Was there not something vulgar in letters, something inconsistent with the easy apathetic graces of a man of the mode? Was it aristocratical to be confounded with creatures who lived in the cock lofts of Grub Street, to bargain with publishers, to hurry printers' devils and be hurried by them, to squabble with managers, to be applauded or hissed by pit, boxes, and galleries? Could he forego the renown of being the first wit of his age? Could he attain that renown without sullying what he valued quite as much, his

character for gentility? The history of his life is the history of a conflict between these two impulses. In his youth the desire of literary fame had the mastery; but soon the meaner ambition overpowered the higher, and obtained supreme dominion over his mind.

His first work, a novel of no great value, he published under the assumed name of Cleophil. His second was the Old Bachelor, acted in 1693, a play inferior indeed to his other comedies, but, in its own line, inferior to them alone. The plot is equally destitute of interest and of probability. The characters are either not distinguishable, or are distinguished only by peculiarities of the most glaring kind. But the dialogue is resplendent with wit and eloquence, which indeed are so abundant that the fool comes in for an ample share, and yet preserves a certain colloquial air, a certain indescribable ease, of which Wycherley had given no example, and which Sheridan in vain attempted to imitate. The author, divided between pride and shame, pride at having written a good play, and shame at having done an ungentlemanlike thing, pretended that he had merely scribbled a few scenes for his own amusement, and affected to yield unwillingly to the importunities of those who pressed him to try his fortune on the stage. The Old Bachelor was seen in manuscript by Dryden, one of whose best qualities was a hearty and generous admiration for the talents of others. He declared that he had never read such a first play, and lent his services to bring it into a form fit for representation. Nothing was wanting to the success of the piece. It was so cast as to bring into play all the comic talent, and to exhibit on the boards in one view all the beauty, which Drury-Lane Theatre, then the only theatre in London, could assemble. The result was a complete triumph; and the author was gratified with rewards more substantial than the applauses of

the pit. Montagu, then a lord of the treasury, immediately gave him a place, and, in a short time, added the reversion of another place of much greater value, which, however, did not become vacant till many years had elapsed.

In 1694, Congreve brought out the Double Dealer, a comedy in which all the powers which had produced the Old Bachelor showed themselves, matured by time and improved by exercise. But the audience was shocked by the characters of Maskwell and Lady Touchwood. And, indeed, there is something strangely revolting in the way in which a group that seems to belong to the house of Laius or of Pelops is introduced into the midst of the Brisks, Froths, Carelesses, and Plyants. The play was unfavourably received. Yet, if the praise of distinguished men could compensate an author for the disapprobation of the multitude, Congreve had no reason to repine. Dryden, in one of the most ingenious, magnificent, and pathetic pieces that he ever wrote, extolled the author of the Double Dealer in terms which now appear extravagantly hyperbolical. "Till Congreve came forth,—so ran this exquisite flattery,—the superiority of the poets who preceded the civil wars was acknowledged.

> "Theirs was the giant race before the flood."

Since the return of the Royal house, much art and ability had been exerted, but the old masters had been still unrivalled.

> "Our builders were with want of genius curst.
> The second temple was not like the first."

At length a writer had arisen who, just emerging from boyhood, had surpassed the authors of the Knight of the Burning Pestle and of the Silent

Woman, and who had only one rival left to contend with.

> "Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
> To Shakspeare gave as much, she could not
> give him more."

Some lines near the end of the poem are singularly graceful and touching, and sank deep into the heart of Congreve.

> "Already am I worn with cares and age,
> And just abandoning the ungrateful stage;
> But you, whom every Muse and Grace adorn,
> Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
> Be kind to my remains; and, oh, defend
> Against your judgment your departed friend.
> Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
> But guard those laurels which descend to you."

The crowd, as usual, gradually came over to the opinion of the men of note; and the Double Dealer was before long quite as much admired, though perhaps never so much liked, as the Old Bachelor.

In 1695 appeared Love for Love, superior both in wit and in scenic effect to either of the preceding plays. It was performed at a new theatre which Betterton and some other actors, disgusted by the treatment which they had received in Drury-Lane, had just opened in a tennis-court near Lincoln's Inn. Scarcely any comedy within the memory of the oldest man had been equally successful. The actors were so elated that they gave Congreve a share in their theatre; and he promised in return to furnish them with a play every year, if his health would permit. Two years passed, however, before he produced the "Mourning Bride," a play which, paltry as it is when compared, we do not say, with Lear or Macbeth, but with the best dramas of Massinger and Ford, stands very high among the tragedies of the

age in which it was written. To find anything so good we must go twelve years back to Venice Preserved, or six years forward to the Fair Penitent. The noble passage which Johnson, both in writing and in conversation, extolled above any other in the English drama, has suffered greatly in the public estimation from the extravagance of his praise. Had he contented himself with saying that it was finer than any thing in the tragedies of Dryden, Otway, Lee, Rowe, Southern, Hughes, and Addison, than any thing, in short, that had been written for the stage since the days of Charles the First, he would not have been in the wrong.

The success of the Mourning Bride was even greater than that of Love for Love. Congreve was now allowed to be the first tragic as well as the first comic dramatist of his time; and all this at twenty-seven. We believe that no English writer except Lord Byron has, at so early an age, stood so high in the estimation of his contemporaries.

At this time took place an event which deserves, in our opinion, a very different sort of notice from that which has been bestowed on it by Mr. Leigh Hunt. The nation had now nearly recovered from the demoralising effect of the Puritan austerity. The gloomy follies of the reign of the Saints were but faintly remembered. The evils produced by profaneness and debauchery were recent and glaring. The Court, since the Revolution, had ceased to patronise licentiousness. Mary was strictly pious; and the vices of the cold, stern, and silent William, were not obtruded on the public eye. Discountenanced by the government, and falling in the favour of the people, the profligacy of the Restoration still maintained its ground in some parts of society. Its strongholds were the places where men of wit and fashion congregated, and above all, the theatres. At this

conjuncture arose a great reformer whom, widely as we differ from him in many important points, we can never mention without respect.

JEREMY COLLIER was a clergyman of the Church of England, bred at Cambridge. His talents and attainments were such as might have been expected to raise him to the highest honours of his profession. He had an extensive knowledge of books; yet he had mingled much with polite society, and is said not to have wanted either grace or vivacity in conversation. There were few branches of literature to which he had not paid some attention. But ecclesiastical antiquity was his favourite study. In religious opinions he belonged to that section of the Church of England which lies furthest from Geneva and nearest to Rome. His notions touching Episcopal government, holy orders, the efficacy of the sacraments, the authority of the Fathers, the guilt of schism, the importance of vestments, ceremonies, and solemn days, differed little from those which are now held by Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman. Towards the close of his life, indeed, Collier took some steps which brought him still nearer to Popery, mixed water with the wine in the Eucharist, made the sign of the cross in confirmation, employed oil in the visitation of the sick, and offered up prayers for the dead. His politics were of a piece with his divinity. He was a Tory of the highest sort, such as in the cant of his age was called a Tantivy. Not even the persecution of the bishops and the spoliation of the universities could shake his steady loyalty. While the Convention was sitting, he wrote with vehemence in defence of the fugitive king, and was in consequence arrested. But his dauntless spirit was not to be so tamed. He refused to take the oaths, renounced all his preferments, and, in a succession of pamphlets written with much violence and with some ability, attempted to

excite the nation against its new masters. In 1692 he was again arrested on suspicion of having been concerned in a treasonable plot. So unbending were his principles that his friends could hardly persuade him to let them bail him; and he afterwards expressed his remorse for having been induced thus to acknowledge, by implication, the authority of an usurping government. He was soon in trouble again. Sir John Friend and Sir William Parkins were tried and convicted of high treason for planning the murder of King William. Collier administered spiritual consolation to them, attended them to Tyburn, and, just before they were turned off, laid his hands on their heads, and by the authority which he derived from Christ, solemnly absolved them. This scene gave indescribable scandal. Tories joined with Whigs in blaming the conduct of the daring priest. Some acts, it was said, which fall under the definition of treason are such that a good man may, in troubled times, be led into them even by his virtues. It may be necessary for the protection of society to punish such a man. But even in punishing him we consider him as legally rather than morally guilty, and hope that his honest error, though it cannot be pardoned here, will not be counted to him for sin hereafter. But such was not the case of Collier's penitents. They were concerned in a plot for waylaying and butchering in an hour of security, one who, whether he were or were not their king, was at all events their fellow-creature. Whether the Jacobite theory about the rights of governments and the duties of subjects were or were not well founded, assassination must always be considered as a great crime. It is condemned even by the maxims of worldly honour and morality. Much more must it be an object of abhorrence to the pure Spouse of Christ. The Church cannot surely, without the saddest and most mournful forebodings,

see one of her children who has been guilty of this great wickedness pass into eternity without any sign of repentance. That these traitors had given any sign of repentance was not alleged. It might be that they had privately declared their contrition; and, if so, the minister of religion might be justified in privately assuring them of the Divine forgiveness. But a public remission ought to have been preceded by a public atonement. The regret of these men, if expressed at all, had been expressed in secret. The hands of Collier had been laid on them in the presence of thousands. The inference which his enemies drew from his conduct was that he did not consider the conspiracy against the life of William as sinful. But this inference he very vehemently, and, we doubt not, very sincerely denied.

The storm raged. The Bishops put forth a solemn censure of the absolution. The Attorney-General brought the matter before the Court of King's Bench. Collier had now made up his mind not to give bail for his appearance before any court which derived its authority from the usurper. He accordingly absconded and was outlawed. He survived these events about thirty years. The prosecution was not pressed; and he was soon suffered to resume his literary pursuits in quiet. At a later period, many attempts were made to shake his perverse integrity by offers of wealth and dignity, but in vain. When he died, towards the end of the reign of George the First, he was still under the ban of the law.

We shall not be suspected of regarding either the politics or the theology of Collier with partiality; but we believe him to have been as honest and courageous a man as ever lived. We will go further, and say that, though passionate and often wrong-headed, he was a singularly fair controversialist,

candid, generous, too high-spirited to take mean advantages even in the most exciting disputes, and pure from all taint of personal malevolence. It must also be admitted that his opinions on ecclesiastical and political affairs, though in themselves absurd and pernicious, eminently qualified him to be the reformer of our lighter literature. The libertinism of the press and of the stage was, as we have said, the effect of a reaction against the Puritan strictness. Profligacy was, like the oak leaf on the twenty-ninth of May, the badge of a cavalier and a high churchman. Decency was associated with conventicles and calves' heads. Grave prelates were too much disposed to wink at the excesses of a body of zealous and able allies who covered Roundheads and Presbyterians with ridicule. If a Whig raised his voice against the impiety and licentiousness of the fashionable writers, his mouth was instantly stopped by the retort; You are one of those who groan at a light quotation from Scripture, and raise estates out of the plunder of the Church, who shudder at a *double entendre*, and chop off the heads of kings. A Baxter, a Burnett, even a Tillotson, would have done little to purify our literature. But when a man fanatical in the cause of episcopacy, and actually under outlawry for his attachment to hereditary right, came forward as the champion of decency, the battle was already half won.

In 1698, Collier published his Short Review of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage, a book which threw the whole literary world into commotion, but which is now much less read than it deserves. The faults of the work, indeed, are neither few nor small. The dissertations on the Greek and Latin drama do not at all help the argument, and, whatever may have been thought of them by the generation which fancied that Christ Church had

refuted Bentley, are such as, in the present day, a scholar of very humble pretensions may venture to pronounce boyish, or rather babyish. The censures are not sufficiently discriminating. The authors whom Collier accused had been guilty of such gross sins against decency that he was certain to weaken instead of strengthening his case, by introducing in his charge against them any matter about which there could be the smallest dispute. He was, however, so injudicious as to place among the outrageous offences which he justly arraigned, some things which are really quite innocent, and some slight instances of levity which, though not perhaps strictly correct, could easily be paralleled from the works of writers who had rendered great services to morality and religion. Thus he blames Congreve, the number and gravity of whose real transgressions made it quite unnecessary to tax him with any that were not real, for using the words "martyr" and "inspiration" in a light sense; as if an archbishop might not say that a speech was inspired by claret, or that an alderman was a martyr to the gout. Sometimes, again, Collier does not sufficiently distinguish between the dramatist and the persons of the drama. Thus he blames Vanbrugh for putting into Lord Foppington's mouth some contemptuous expressions respecting the Church service; though it is obvious that Vanbrugh could not better express reverence than by making Lord Foppington express contempt. There is also throughout the Short View too strong a display of professional feeling. Collier is not content with claiming for his order an immunity from indiscriminate scurrility; he will not allow that, in any case, any word or act of a divine can be a proper subject for ridicule. Nor does he confine this benefit of clergy to the ministers of the Established Church. He extends the privilege

to Catholic priests, and what in him is more surprising, to Dissenting preachers. This, however, is a mere trifle. Imaums, Brahmins, priests of Jupiter, priests of Baal, are all to be held sacred. Dryden is blamed for making the Mufti in Don Sebastian talk nonsense. Lee is called to a severe account for his incivility to Tiresias. But the most curious passage is that in which Collier resents some uncivil reflections thrown by Cassandra, in Dryden's Cleomenes, on the calf Apis and his hierophants. The words "grass-eating, foddered god," words which really are much in the style of several passages in the Old Testament, give as much offence to this Christian divine as they could have given to the priests of Memphis.

But, when all deductions have been made, great merit must be allowed to this work. There is hardly any book of that time from which it would be possible to select specimens of writing so excellent and so various. To compare Collier with Pascal would indeed be absurd. Yet we hardly know where, except in the Provincial Letters, we can find mirth so harmoniously and becomingly blended with solemnity as in the Short View. In truth, all the modes of ridicule, from broad fun to polished and antithetical sarcasm, were at Collier's command. On the other hand, he was complete master of the rhetoric of honest indignation. We scarcely know any volume which contains so many bursts of that peculiar eloquence which comes from the heart and goes to the heart. Indeed the spirit of the book is truly heroic. In order fairly to appreciate it, we must remember the situation in which the writer stood. He was under the frown of power. His name was already a mark for the invectives of one half of the writers of the age, when, in the cause of good taste, good sense, and good morals, he gave battle to the other half. Strong as his political

prejudices were, he seems on this occasion to have entirely laid them aside. He has forgotten that he is a Jacobite, and remembers only that he is a citizen and a Christian. Some of his sharpest censures are directed against poetry which had been hailed with delight by the Tory party, and had inflicted a deep wound on the Whigs. It is inspiriting to see how gallantly the solitary outlaw advances to attack enemies, formidable separately, and, it might have been thought, irresistible when combined, distributes his swashing blows right and left among Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh, treads the wretched D'Urfey down in the dirt beneath his feet, and strikes with all his strength full at the towering crest of Dryden.

The effect produced by the Short View was immense. The nation was on the side of Collier. But it could not be doubted that, in the great host which he had defied, some champion would be found to lift the gauntlet. The general belief was that Dryden would take the field; and all the wits anticipated a sharp contest between two well-paired combatants. The great poet had been singled out in the most marked manner. It was well known that he was deeply hurt, that much smaller provocations had formerly roused him to violent resentment, and that there was no literary weapon, offensive or defensive, of which he was not master. But his conscience smote him; he stood abashed, like the fallen archangel at the rebuke of Zephon,—

> "And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
> Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw and pined
> His loss."

At a later period he mentioned the Short View in the preface to his Fables. He complained, with some asperity, of the harshness with which he had

been treated, and urged some matters in mitigation. But, on the whole, he frankly acknowledged that he had been justly reproved. "If," said he, "Mr. Collier be my enemy, let him triumph. If he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance."

It would have been wise in Congreve to follow his master's example. He was precisely in that situation in which it is madness to attempt a vindication; for his guilt was so clear, that no address or eloquence could obtain an acquittal. On the other hand, there were in his case many extenuating circumstances which, if he had acknowledged his error and promised amendment, would have procured his pardon. The most rigid censor could not but make great allowances for the faults into which so young a man had been seduced by evil example, by the luxuriance of a vigorous fancy, and by the inebriating effect of popular applause. The esteem, as well as the admiration, of the public was still within his reach. He might easily have effaced all memory of his transgressions, and have shared with Addison the glory of showing that the most brilliant wit may be the ally of virtue. But, in any case, prudence should have restrained him from encountering Collier. The nonjuror was a man thoroughly fitted by nature, education, and habit, for polemical dispute. Congreve's mind, though a mind of no common fertility and vigour, was of a different class. No man understood so well the art of polishing epigrams and repartees into the clearest effulgence, and setting them neatly in easy and familiar dialogue. In this sort of jewellery he attained to a mastery unprecedented and inimitable. But he was altogether rude in the art of controversy; and he had a cause to defend which scarcely any art could have rendered victorious.

Collier v. M.

The event was such as might have been foreseen.

Congreve's answer was a complete failure. He was angry, obscure, and dull. Even the Green Room and Will's Coffee-House were compelled to acknowledge that in wit, as well as in argument, the parson had a decided advantage over the poet. Not only was Congreve unable to make any show of a case where he was in the wrong; but he succeeded in putting himself completely in the wrong where he was in the right. Collier had taxed him with profaneness for calling a clergyman Mr. Prig, and for introducing a coachman named Jehu, in allusion to the King of Israel, who was known at a distance by his furious driving. Had there been nothing worse in the Old Bachelor and Double Dealer, Congreve might pass for as pure a writer as Cowper himself, who, in poems revised by so austere a censor as John Newton, calls a fox-hunting squire Nimrod, and gives to a chaplain the disrespectful name of Smug. Congreve might with good effect have appealed to the public whether it might not be fairly presumed that, when such frivolous charges were made, there were no very serious charges to make. Instead of doing this, he pretended that he meant no allusion to the Bible by the name of Jehu, and no reflection by the name of Prig. Strange, that a man of such parts should, in order to defend himself against imputations which nobody could regard as important, tell untruths which it was certain that nobody would believe!

One of the pleas which Congreve set up for himself and his brethren was that, though they might be guilty of a little levity here and there, they were careful to inculcate a moral, packed close into two or three lines, at the end of every play. Had the fact been as he stated it, the defence would be worth very little. For no man acquainted with human nature could think that a sententious couplet would undo all the mischief that five profligate acts had done. But

it would have been wise in Congreve to have looked again at his own comedies before he used this argument. Collier did so; and found that the moral of the Old Bachelor, the grave apophthegm which is to be a set-off against all the libertinism of the piece, is contained in the following triplet:

> "What rugged ways attend the noon of life!
> Our sun declines, and with what anxious strife,
> What pain, we tug that galling load—a wife."

"Love for Love," says Collier, "may have a somewhat better farewell, but it would do a man little service should he remember it to his dying day:"

> "The miracle to-day is, that we find
> A lover true, not that a woman's kind."

Collier's reply was severe and triumphant. One of his repartees we will quote, not as a favourable specimen of his manner, but because it was called forth by Congreve's characteristic affectation. The poet spoke of the Old Bachelor as a trifle to which he attached no value, and which had become public by a sort of accident. "I wrote it," he said, "to amuse myself in a slow recovery from a fit of sickness." "What his disease was," replied Collier, "I am not to inquire: but it must be a very ill one to be worse than the remedy."

All that Congreve gained by coming forward on this occasion was that he completely deprived himself of the excuse which he might with justice have pleaded for his early offences. "Why," asked Collier, "should the man laugh at the mischief of the boy, and make the disorders of his nonage his own, by an after approbation?"

Congreve was not Collier's only opponent. Vanbrugh, Dennis, and Settle took the field. And, from a passage in a contemporary satire, we are inclined to

think that among the answers to the Short View was one written, or supposed to be written, by Wycherley. The victory remained with Collier. A great and rapid reform in almost all the departments of our lighter literature was the effect of his labours. A new race of wits and poets arose, who generally treated with reverence the great ties which bind society together, and whose very indecencies were decent when compared with those of the school which flourished during the last forty years of the seventeenth century.

This controversy probably prevented Congreve from fulfilling the engagements into which he had entered with the actors. It was not till 1700 that he produced the Way of the World, the most deeply meditated and the most brilliantly written of all his works. It wants, perhaps, the constant movement, the effervescence of animal spirits, which we find in Love for Love. But the hysterical rants of Lady Wishfort, the meeting of Witwould and his brother, the country knight's courtship and his subsequent revel, and, above all, the chase and surrender of Millamant, are superior to any thing that is to be found in the whole range of English comedy from the civil war downwards. It is quite inexplicable to us that this play should have failed on the stage. Yet so it was; and the author, already sore with the wounds which Collier had inflicted, was galled past endurance by this new stroke. He resolved never again to expose himself to the rudeness of a tasteless audience, and took leave of the theatre for ever.

He lived twenty-eight years longer, without adding to the high literary reputation which he had attained. He read much while he retained his eyesight, and now and then wrote a short essay, or put an idle tale into verse; but he appears never to have planned any considerable work. The miscellaneous pieces which

he published in 1710 are of little value, and have long been forgotten.

The stock of fame which he had acquired by his comedies was sufficient, assisted by the graces of his manner and conversation, to secure for him a high place in the estimation of the world. During the winter he lived among the most distinguished and agreeable people in London. His summers were passed at the splendid country-seats of ministers and peers. Literary envy and political faction, which in that age respected nothing else, respected his repose. He professed to be one of the party of which his patron Montagu, now Lord Halifax, was the head. But he had civil words and small good offices for men of every shade of opinion. And men of every shade of opinion spoke well of him in return.

His means were for a long time scanty. The place which he had in possession barely enabled him to live with comfort. And, when the Tories came into power, some thought that he would lose even this moderate provision. But Harley, who was by no means disposed to adopt the exterminating policy of the October club, and who, with all his faults of understanding and temper, had a sincere kindness for men of genius, re-assured the anxious poet by quoting very gracefully and happily the lines of Virgil,

"Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora Pœni,
Nec tam aversus equos Tyria Sol jungit ab urbe."

The indulgence with which Congreve was treated by the Tories was not purchased by any concession on his part which could justly offend the Whigs. It was his rare good fortune to share the triumph of his friends without having shared their proscription. When the House of Hanover came to the throne, he partook largely of the prosperity of those with whom

he was connected. The reversion to which he had been nominated twenty years before fell in. He was made secretary to the island of Jamaica; and his whole income amounted to twelve hundred a year, a fortune which, for a single man, was in that age not only easy but splendid. He continued, however, to practise the frugality which he had learned when he could scarce spare, as Swift tells us, a shilling to pay the chairmen who carried him to Lord Halifax's. Though he had nobody to save for, he laid up at least as much as he spent.

The infirmities of age came early upon him. His habits had been intemperate; he suffered much from gout; and, when confined to his chamber, he had no longer the solace of literature. Blindness, the most cruel misfortune that can befall the lonely student, made his books useless to him. He was thrown on society for all his amusement; and in society his good breeding and vivacity made him always welcome.

By the rising men of letters he was considered not as a rival, but as a classic. He had left their arena; he never measured his strength with them; and he was always loud in applause of their exertions. They could, therefore, entertain no jealousy of him, and thought no more of detracting from his fame than of carping at the great men who had been lying a hundred years in Poets' Corner. Even the inmates of Grub Street, even the heroes of the Dunciad, were for once just to living merit. There can be no stronger illustration of the estimation in which Congreve was held than the fact that the English Iliad, a work which appeared with more splendid auspices than any other in our language, was dedicated to him. There was not a duke in the kingdom who would not have been proud of such a compliment. Dr. Johnson expresses great admiration for the in-

dependence of spirit which Pope showed on this occasion. "He passed over peers and statesmen to inscribe his Iliad to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praise had been complete, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was chosen for so great an honour, it is not now possible to know." It is certainly impossible to know; yet we think, it is possible to guess. The translation of the Iliad had been zealously befriended by men of all political opinions. The poet who, at an early age, had been raised to affluence by the emulous liberality of Whigs and Tories, could not with propriety inscribe to a chief of either party a work which had been munificently patronised by both. It was necessary to find some person who was at once eminent and neutral. It was therefore necessary to pass over peers and statesmen. Congreve had a high name in letters. He had a high name in aristocratic circles. He lived on terms of civility with men of all parties. By a courtesy paid to him, neither the ministers nor the leaders of the opposition could be offended.

Johnson on Pope.

The singular affectation which had from the first been characteristic of Congreve grew stronger and stronger as he advanced in life. At last it became disagreeable to him to hear his own comedies praised. Voltaire, whose soul was burned up by the raging desire for literary renown, was half puzzled and half disgusted by what he saw, during his visit to England, of this extraordinary whim. Congreve disclaimed the character of a poet, declared that his plays were trifles produced in an idle hour, and begged that Voltaire would consider him merely as a gentleman. "If you had been merely a gentleman," said Voltaire, "I should not have come to see you."

Congreve was not a man of warm affections. Domestic ties he had none; and in the temporary connections which he formed with a succession of

beauties from the green-room his heart does not appear to have been interested. Of all his attachments, that to Mrs. Bracegirdle lasted the longest and was the most celebrated. This charming actress, who was, during many years, the idol of all London, whose face caused the fatal broil in which Mountfort fell, and for which Lord Mohun was tried by the peers, and to whom the Earl of Scarsdale was said to have made honourable addresses, had conducted herself, in very trying circumstances, with extraordinary discretion. Congreve at length became her confidential friend. They constantly rode out together and dined together. Some people said that she was his mistress, and others that she would soon be his wife. He was at last drawn away from her by the influence of a wealthier and haughtier beauty. Henrietta, daughter of the great Marlborough, and Countess of Godolphin, had, on her father's death, succeeded to his dukedom, and to the greater part of his immense property. Her husband was an insignificant man, of whom Lord Chesterfield said that he came to the House of Peers only to sleep, and that he might as well sleep on the right as on the left of the woolsack. Between the Duchess and Congreve sprang up a most eccentric friendship. He had a seat every day at her table, and assisted in the direction of her concerts. That malignant old beldame, the Dowager Duchess Sarah, who had quarrelled with her daughter as she had quarrelled with every body else, affected to suspect that there was something wrong. But the world in general appears to have thought that a great lady might, without any imputation on her character, pay marked attention to a man of eminent genius who was near sixty years old, who was still older in appearance and in constitution, who was confined to his chair by gout, and who was unable to read from blindness.

In the summer of 1728, Congreve was ordered to try the Bath waters. During his excursion he was overturned in his chariot, and received some severe internal injury from which he never recovered. He came back to London in a dangerous state, complained constantly of a pain in his side, and continued to sink, till in the following January he expired.

He left ten thousand pounds, saved out of the emoluments of his lucrative places. Johnson says that this money ought to have gone to the Congreve family, which was then in great distress. Dr. Young and Mr. Leigh Hunt, two gentlemen who seldom agree with each other, but with whom, on this occasion, we are happy to agree, think that it ought to have gone to Mrs. Bracegirdle. Congreve bequeathed two hundred pounds to Mrs. Bracegirdle, and an equal sum to a certain Mrs. Jellat; but the bulk of his accumulations went to the Duchess of Marlborough, in whose immense wealth such a legacy was as a drop in the bucket. It might have raised the fallen fortunes of a Staffordshire squire; it might have enabled a retired actress to enjoy every comfort, and, in her sense, every luxury: but it was hardly sufficient to defray the Duchess's establishment for three months.

The great lady buried her friend with a pomp seldom seen at the funerals of poets. The corpse lay in state under the ancient roof of the Jerusalem Chamber, and was interred in Westminster Abbey. The pall was borne by the Duke of Bridgewater, Lord Cobham, the Earl of Wilmington, who had been Speaker, and was afterwards First Lord of the Treasury, and other men of high consideration. Her Grace laid out her friend's bequest in a superb diamond necklace, which she wore in honour of him, and, if report is to be believed, showed her regard in

ways much more extraordinary. It is said that a statue of him in ivory, which moved by clockwork, was placed daily at her table, that she had a wax doll made in imitation of him, and that the feet of the doll were regularly blistered and anointed by the doctors, as poor Congreve's feet had been when he suffered from the gout. A monument was erected to the poet in Westminster Abbey, with an inscription written by the Duchess; and Lord Cobham honoured him with a cenotaph, which seems to us, though that is a bold word, the ugliest and most absurd of the buildings at Stowe.

We have said that Wycherley was a worse Congreve. There was, indeed, a remarkable analogy between the writings and lives of these two men. Both were gentlemen liberally educated. Both led town lives, and knew human nature only as it appears between Hyde Park and the Tower. Both were men of wit. Neither had much imagination. Both at an early age produced lively and profligate comedies. Both retired from the field while still in early manhood, and owed to their youthful achievements in literature whatever consideration they enjoyed in later life. Both, after they had ceased to write for the stage, published volumes of miscellanies which did little credit either to their talents or to their morals. Both, during their declining years, hung loose upon society; and both, in their last moments, made eccentric and unjustifiable dispositions of their estates.

But in every point Congreve maintained his superiority to Wycherley. Wycherley had wit; but the wit of Congreve far outshines that of every comic writer, except Sheridan, who has arisen within the last two centuries. Congreve had not, in a large measure, the poetical faculty; but compared with Wycherley he might be called a great poet. Wycherley had some

knowledge of books; but Congreve was a man of real learning. Congreve's offences against decorum, though highly culpable, were not so gross as those of Wycherley; nor did Congreve, like Wycherley, exhibit to the world the deplorable spectacle of a licentious dotage. Congreve died in the enjoyment of high consideration; Wycherley forgotten or despised. Congreve's will was absurd and capricious; but Wycherley's last actions appear to have been prompted by obdurate malignity.

Here, at least for the present, we must stop. Vanbrugh and Farquhar are not men to be hastily dismissed, and we have not left ourselves space to do them justice.

LORD HOLLAND. (April, 1841.)

The Opinions of Lord Holland, as recorded in the Journals of the House of Lords, from 1797 *to* 1841. Collected and edited by D. C. Moylan, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-Law. 8vo. London: 1841.

Many reasons make it impossible for us to lay before our readers, at the present moment, a complete view of the character and public career of the late Lord Holland. But we feel that we have already deferred too long the duty of paying some tribute to his memory. We feel that it is more becoming to bring without further delay an offering, though intrinsically of little value, than to leave his tomb longer without some token of our reverence and love.

We shall say very little of the book which lies on our table. And yet it is a book which, even if it had been the work of a less distinguished man, or had appeared under circumstances less interesting, would have well repaid an attentive perusal. It is valuable, both as a record of principles and as a model of composition. We find in it all the great maxims which, during more than forty years, guided Lord Holland's public conduct, and the chief reasons on which those maxims rest, condensed into the smallest possible space, and set forth with admirable perspicuity, dignity, and precision. To his opinions on Foreign Policy we for the most part cordially assent; but, now and then we are inclined to think them imprudently generous. We could not have signed the

protest against the detention of Napoleon. The Protest respecting the course which England pursued at the Congress of Verona, though it contains much that is excellent, contains also positions which, we are inclined to think, Lord Holland would, at a later period, have admitted to be unsound. But to all his doctrines on constitutional questions, we give our hearty approbation; and we firmly believe that no British Government has ever deviated from that line of internal policy which he has traced, without detriment to the public.

We will give, as a specimen of this little volume, a single passage, in which a chief article of the political creed of the Whigs is stated and explained, with singular clearness, force, and brevity. Our readers will remember that, in 1825, the Catholic Association raised the cry of emancipation with most formidable effect. The Tories acted after their kind. Instead of removing the grievance they tried to put down the agitation, and brought in a law, apparently sharp and stringent, but in truth utterly impotent, for restraining the right of petition. Lord Holland's Protest on that occasion is excellent.

"We are," says he, "well aware that the privileges of the people, the rights of free discussion, and the spirit and letter of our popular institutions, must render—and they are intended to render—the continuance of an extensive grievance, and of the dissatisfaction consequent thereupon, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and ultimately subversive of the authority of the state. Experience and theory alike forbid us to deny that effect of a free constitution; a sense of justice and a love of liberty equally deter us from lamenting it. But we have always been taught to look for the remedy of such disorders in the redress of the grievances which justify them, and in the removal of the dissatisfaction from which they flow—not in restraints on ancient privileges, not in inroads on the right of public discussion, nor in violations of the principles of a free

government. If, therefore, the legal method of seeking redress, which has been resorted to by persons labouring under grievous disabilities, be fraught with immediate or remote danger to the state, we draw from that circumstance a conclusion long since foretold by great authority—namely, that the British constitution, and large exclusions, cannot subsist together; that the constitution must destroy them, or they will destroy the constitution."

It was not, however, of this little book, valuable and interesting as it is, but of the author, that we meant to speak; and we will try to do so with calmness and impartiality.

In order to fully appreciate the character of Lord Holland, it is necessary to go far back into the history of his family; for he had inherited something more than a coronet and an estate. To the house of which he was the head belongs one distinction which we believe to be without a parallel in our annals. During more than a century, there has never been a time at which a Fox has not stood in a prominent station among public men. Scarcely had the chequered career of the first Lord Holland closed, when his son, Charles, rose to the head of the Opposition, and to the first rank among English debaters. And before Charles was borne to Westminster Abbey a third Fox had already become one of the most conspicuous politicians in the kingdom.

It is impossible not to be struck by the strong family likeness which, in spite of diversities arising from education and position, appears in these three distinguished persons. In their faces and figures there was a resemblance, such as is common enough in novels, where one picture is good for ten generations, but such as in real life is seldom found. The ample person, the massy and thoughtful forehead, the large eyebrows, the full cheek and lip, the expression, so singularly compounded of sense, humour,

courage, openness, a strong will and a sweet temper, were common to all. But the features of the founder of the House, as the pencil of Reynolds and the chisel of Nollekens have handed them down to us, were disagreeably harsh and exaggerated. In his descendants the aspect was preserved, but it was softened, till it became, in the late lord, the most gracious and interesting countenance that was ever lighted up by the mingled lustre of intelligence and benevolence.

As it was with the faces of the men of this noble family, so was it also with their minds. Nature had done much for them all. She had moulded them all of that clay of which she is most sparing. To all she had given strong reason and sharp wit, a quick relish for every physical and intellectual enjoyment, constitutional intrepidity, and that frankness by which constitutional intrepidity is generally accompanied, spirits which nothing could depress, tempers easy, generous, and placable, and that genial courtesy which has its seat in the heart, and of which artificial politeness is only a faint and cold imitation. Such a disposition is the richest inheritance that ever was entailed on any family.

But training and situation greatly modified the fine qualities which nature lavished with such profusion on three generations of the house of Fox. The first Lord Holland was a needy political adventurer. He entered public life at a time when the standard of integrity among statesmen was low. He started as the adherent of a minister who had indeed many titles to respect, who possessed eminent talents both for administration and for debate, who understood the public interest well, and who meant fairly by the country, but who had seen so much perfidy and meanness that he had become sceptical as to the existence of probity. Weary of the cant

of patriotism, Walpole had learned to talk a cant of a different kind. Disgusted by that sort of hypocrisy which is at least a homage to virtue, he was too much in the habit of practising the less respectable hypocrisy which ostentatiously displays, and sometimes even simulates vice. To Walpole Fox attached himself, politically and personally, with the ardour which belonged to his temperament. And it is not to be denied that in the school of Walpole he contracted faults which destroyed the value of his many great endowments. He raised himself, indeed, to the first consideration in the House of Commons; he became a consummate master of the art of debate; he attained honours and immense wealth; but the public esteem and confidence were withheld from him. His private friends, indeed, justly extolled his generosity and good-nature. They maintained that in those parts of his conduct which they could least defend there was nothing sordid, and that, if he was misled, he was misled by amiable feelings, by a desire to serve his friends, and by anxious tenderness for his children. But by the nation he was regarded as a man of insatiable rapacity and desperate ambition; as a man ready to adopt, without scruple, the most immoral and the most unconstitutional manners; as a man perfectly fitted, by all his opinions and feelings, for the work of managing the Parliament by means of secret-service-money, and of keeping down the people with the bayonet. Many of his contemporaries had a morality quite as lax as his: but very few among them had his talents, and none had his hardihood and energy. He could not, like Sandys and Dodington, find safety in contempt. He therefore became an object of such general aversion as no statesman since the fall of Strafford has incurred, of such general aversion as was probably never in any

country incurred by a man of so kind and cordial a disposition. A weak mind would have sunk under such a load of unpopularity. But that resolute spirit seemed to derive new firmness from the public hatred. The only effect which reproaches appeared to produce on him, was to sour, in some degree, his naturally sweet temper. The last acts of his public life were marked, not only by that audacity which he had derived from nature, not only by that immorality which he had learned in the school of Walpole, but by a harshness which almost amounted to cruelty, and which had never been supposed to belong to his character. His severity increased the unpopularity from which it had sprung. The well-known lampoon of Gray may serve as a specimen of the feeling of the country. All the images are taken from shipwrecks, quicksands, and cormorants. Lord Holland is represented as complaining, that the cowardice of his accomplices had prevented him from putting down the free spirit of the city of London by sword and fire, and as pining for the time when birds of prey should make their nests in Westminster Abbey, and unclean beasts burrow in St. Paul's.

Within a few months after the death of this remarkable man, his second son Charles appeared at the head of the party opposed to the American War. Charles had inherited the bodily and mental constitution of his father, and had been much, far too much, under his father's influence. It was indeed impossible that a son of so affectionate and noble a nature should not have been warmly attached to a parent who possessed many fine qualities, and who carried his indulgence and liberality towards his children even to a culpable extent. Charles saw that the person to whom he was bound by the strongest ties was, in the highest degree, odious to the nation; and the effect was what might have

been expected from the strong passions and constitutional boldness of so high-spirited a youth. He cast in his lot with his father, and took, while still a boy, a deep part in the most unjustifiable and unpopular measures that had been adopted since the reign of James the Second. In the debates on the Middlesex Election, he distinguished himself, not only by his precocious powers of eloquence, but by the vehement and scornful manner in which he bade defiance to public opinion. He was at that time regarded as a man likely to be the most formidable champion of arbitrary government that had appeared since the Revolution, to be a Bute with far greater powers, a Mansfield with far greater courage. Happily his father's death liberated him early from the pernicious influence by which he had been misled. His mind expanded. His range of observation became wider. His genius broke through early prejudices. His natural benevolence and magnanimity had fair play, In a very short time he appeared in a situation worthy of his understanding and of his heart. From a family whose name was associated in the public mind with tyranny and corruption, from a party of which the theory and the practice were equally servile, from the midst of the Luttrells, the Dysons, the Barringtons, came forth the greatest parliamentary defender of civil and religious liberty.

The late Lord Holland succeeded to the talents and to the fine natural dispositions of his House. But his situation was very different from that of the two eminent men of whom we have spoken. In some important respects it was better, in some it was worse than theirs. He had one great advantage over them. He received a good political education. The first lord was educated by Sir Robert Walpole. Mr. Fox was educated by his father. The late lord was educated by Mr. Fox.

The pernicious maxims early imbibed by the first Lord Holland, made his great talents useless, and worse than useless, to the state. The pernicious maxims early imbibed by Mr. Fox led him, at the commencement of his public life, into great faults which, though afterwards nobly expiated, were never forgotten. To the very end of his career, small men, when they had nothing else to say in defence of their own tyranny, bigotry, and imbecility, could always raise a cheer by some paltry taunt about the election of Colonel Luttrell, the imprisonment of the lord mayor, and other measures in which the great Whig leader had borne a part at the age of one or two and twenty. On Lord Holland no such slur could be thrown. Those who most dissent from his opinions must acknowledge that a public life more consistent is not to be found in our annals. Every part of it is in perfect harmony with every other part; and the whole is in perfect harmony with the great principles of toleration and civil freedom. This rare felicity is in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Mr. Fox. Lord Holland, as was natural in a person of his talents and expectations, began at a very early age to take the keenest interest in politics; and Mr. Fox found the greatest pleasure in forming the mind of so hopeful a pupil. They corresponded largely on political subjects when the young lord was only sixteen; and their friendship and mutual confidence continued to the day of that mournful separation at Chiswick. Under such training such a man as Lord Holland was in no danger of falling into those faults which threw a dark shade over the whole career of his grandfather, and from which the youth of his uncle was not wholly free.

On the other hand, the late Lord Holland, as compared with his grandfather and his uncle, laboured

under one great disadvantage. They were members of the House of Commons. He became a Peer while still an infant. When he entered public life, the House of Lords was a very small and a very decorous assembly. The minority to which he belonged was scarcely able to muster five or six votes on the most important nights, when eighty or ninety lords were present. Debate had accordingly become a mere form, as it was in the Irish House of Peers before the Union. This was a great misfortune to a man like Lord Holland. It was not by occasionally addressing fifteen or twenty solemn and unfriendly auditors, that his grandfather and his uncle attained their unrivalled parliamentary skill. The former had learned his art in "the great Walpolean battles," on nights when Onslow was in the chair seventeen hours without intermission, when the thick ranks on both sides kept unbroken order till long after the winter sun had risen upon them, when the blind were led out by the hand into the lobby and the paralytic laid down in their bed-clothes on the benches. The powers of Charles Fox were, from the first, exercised in conflicts not less exciting. The great talents of the late Lord Holland had no such advantage. This was the more unfortunate, because the peculiar species of eloquence which belonged to him in common with his family required much practice to develope it. With strong sense, and the greatest readiness of wit, a certain tendency to hesitation was hereditary in the line of Fox. This hesitation arose, not from the poverty, but from the wealth of their vocabulary. They paused, not from the difficulty of finding one expression, but from the difficulty of choosing between several. It was only by slow degrees and constant exercise that the first Lord Holland and his son overcame the defect. Indeed neither of them overcame it completely.

In statement, the late Lord Holland was not successful; his chief excellence lay in reply. He had the quick eye of his house for the unsound parts of an argument, and a great felicity in exposing them. He was decidedly more distinguished in debate than any peer of his time who had not sat in the House of Commons. Nay, to find his equal among persons similarly situated, we must go back eighty years to Earl Granville. For Mansfield, Thurlow, Loughborough, Grey, Grenville, Brougham, Plunkett, and other eminent men, living and dead, whom we will not stop to enumerate, carried to the Upper House an eloquence formed and matured in the Lower. The opinion of the most discerning judges was that Lord Holland's oratorical performances, though sometimes most successful, afforded no fair measure of his oratorical powers, and that, in an assembly of which the debates were frequent and animated, he would have attained a very high order of excellence. It was, indeed, impossible to listen to his conversation without seeing that he was born a debater. To him, as to his uncle, the exercise of the mind in discussion was a positive pleasure. With the greatest good nature and good breeding, he was the very opposite to an assenter. The word "disputatious" is generally used as a word of reproach; but we can express our meaning only by saying that Lord Holland was most courteously and pleasantly disputatious. In truth, his quickness in discovering and apprehending distinctions and analogies was such as a veteran judge might envy. The lawyers of the Duchy of Lancaster were astonished to find in an unprofessional man so strong a relish for the esoteric parts of their science, and complained that as soon as they had split a hair, Lord Holland proceeded to split the filaments into filaments still finer. In a mind less happily constituted, there might have been a risk

that this turn for subtilty would have produced serious evil. But in the heart and understanding of Lord Holland there was ample security against all such danger. He was not a man to be the dupe of his own ingenuity. He put his logic to its proper use; and in him the dialectician was always subordinate to the statesman.

His political life is written in the chronicles of his country. Perhaps, as we have already intimated, his opinions on two or three great questions of foreign policy were open to just objection. Yet even his errors, if he erred, were amiable and respectable. We are not sure that we do not love and admire him the more because he was now and then seduced from what we regard as a wise policy by sympathy with the oppressed, by generosity towards the fallen, by a philanthropy so enlarged that it took in all nations, by love of peace, a love which in him was second only to the love of freedom, and by the magnanimous credulity of a mind which was as incapable of suspecting as of devising mischief.

To his views on questions of domestic policy the voice of his countrymen does ample justice. They revere the memory of the man who was, during forty years, the constant protector of all oppressed races and persecuted sects, of the man whom neither the prejudices nor the interests belonging to his station could seduce from the path of right, of the noble, who in every great crisis cast in his lot with the commons, of the planter, who made manful war on the slave trade, of the landowner, whose whole heart was in the struggle against the corn-laws.

We have hitherto touched almost exclusively on those parts of Lord Holland's character which were open to the observation of millions. How shall we express the feelings with which his memory is cherished by those who were honoured with his

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"Thou hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick's noble race,
Why, once so loved, whene'er thy bower appears,
O'er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears?
How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks and unpolluted air?
How sweet the glooms beneath thine aged trees,
Thy noon-tide shadow and thine evening breeze!
His image thy forsaken bowers restore;
Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more;
No more the summer in thy glooms allayed,
Thine evening breezes, and thy noon-day shade."

Yet a few years, and the shades and structures may follow their illustrious masters. The wonderful city which, ancient and gigantic as it is, still continues to grow as fast as a young town of logwood by a water-privilege in Michigan, may soon displace those turrets and gardens which are associated with so much that is interesting and noble, with the courtly magnificence of Rich, with the loves of Ormond, with the counsels of Cromwell, with the death of Addison. The time is coming when, perhaps, a few old men, the last survivors of our generation, will in vain seek, amidst new streets, and squares, and railway stations, for the site of that dwelling which was in their youth the favourite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of scholars, philosophers, and statesmen. They will then remember, with strange tenderness, many objects

been expected from the strong passions and constitutional boldness of so high-spirited a youth. He cast in his lot with his father, and took, while still a boy, a deep part in the most unjustifiable and unpopular measures that had been adopted since the reign of James the Second. In the debates on the Middlesex Election, he distinguished himself, not only by his precocious powers of eloquence, but by the vehement and scornful manner in which he bade defiance to public opinion. He was at that time regarded as a man likely to be the most formidable champion of arbitrary government that had appeared since the Revolution, to be a Bute with far greater powers, a Mansfield with far greater courage. Happily his father's death liberated him early from the pernicious influence by which he had been misled. His mind expanded. His range of observation became wider. His genius broke through early prejudices. His natural benevolence and magnanimity had fair play, In a very short time he appeared in a situation worthy of his understanding and of his heart. From a family whose name was associated in the public mind with tyranny and corruption, from a party of which the theory and the practice were equally servile, from the midst of the Luttrells, the Dysons, the Barringtons, came forth the greatest parliamentary defender of civil and religious liberty.

The late Lord Holland succeeded to the talents and to the fine natural dispositions of his House. But his situation was very different from that of the two eminent men of whom we have spoken. In some important respects it was better, in some it was worse than theirs. He had one great advantage over them. He received a good political education. The first lord was educated by Sir Robert Walpole. Mr. Fox was educated by his father. The late lord was educated by Mr. Fox.

The pernicious maxims early imbibed by the first Lord Holland, made his great talents useless, and worse than useless, to the state. The pernicious maxims early imbibed by Mr. Fox led him, at the commencement of his public life, into great faults which, though afterwards nobly expiated, were never forgotten. To the very end of his career, small men, when they had nothing else to say in defence of their own tyranny, bigotry, and imbecility, could always raise a cheer by some paltry taunt about the election of Colonel Luttrell, the imprisonment of the lord mayor, and other measures in which the great Whig leader had borne a part at the age of one or two and twenty. On Lord Holland no such slur could be thrown. Those who most dissent from his opinions must acknowledge that a public life more consistent is not to be found in our annals. Every part of it is in perfect harmony with every other part; and the whole is in perfect harmony with the great principles of toleration and civil freedom. This rare felicity is in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Mr. Fox. Lord Holland, as was natural in a person of his talents and expectations, began at a very early age to take the keenest interest in politics; and Mr. Fox found the greatest pleasure in forming the mind of so hopeful a pupil. They corresponded largely on political subjects when the young lord was only sixteen; and their friendship and mutual confidence continued to the day of that mournful separation at Chiswick. Under such training such a man as Lord Holland was in no danger of falling into those faults which threw a dark shade over the whole career of his grandfather, and from which the youth of his uncle was not wholly free.

On the other hand, the late Lord Holland, as compared with his grandfather and his uncle, laboured

under one great disadvantage. They were members of the House of Commons. He became a Peer while still an infant. When he entered public life, the House of Lords was a very small and a very decorous assembly. The minority to which he belonged was scarcely able to muster five or six votes on the most important nights, when eighty or ninety lords were present. Debate had accordingly become a mere form, as it was in the Irish House of Peers before the Union. This was a great misfortune to a man like Lord Holland. It was not by occasionally addressing fifteen or twenty solemn and unfriendly auditors, that his grandfather and his uncle attained their unrivalled parliamentary skill. The former had learned his art in "the great Walpolean battles," on nights when Onslow was in the chair seventeen hours without intermission, when the thick ranks on both sides kept unbroken order till long after the winter sun had risen upon them, when the blind were led out by the hand into the lobby and the paralytic laid down in their bed-clothes on the benches. The powers of Charles Fox were, from the first, exercised in conflicts not less exciting. The great talents of the late Lord Holland had no such advantage. This was the more unfortunate, because the peculiar species of eloquence which belonged to him in common with his family required much practice to develope it. With strong sense, and the greatest readiness of wit, a certain tendency to hesitation was hereditary in the line of Fox. This hesitation arose, not from the poverty, but from the wealth of their vocabulary. They paused, not from the difficulty of finding one expression, but from the difficulty of choosing between several. It was only by slow degrees and constant exercise that the first Lord Holland and his son overcame the defect. Indeed neither of them overcame it completely.

In statement, the late Lord Holland was not successful; his chief excellence lay in reply. He had the quick eye of his house for the unsound parts of an argument, and a great felicity in exposing them. He was decidedly more distinguished in debate than any peer of his time who had not sat in the House of Commons. Nay, to find his equal among persons similarly situated, we must go back eighty years to Earl Granville. For Mansfield, Thurlow, Loughborough, Grey, Grenville, Brougham, Plunkett, and other eminent men, living and dead, whom we will not stop to enumerate, carried to the Upper House an eloquence formed and matured in the Lower. The opinion of the most discerning judges was that Lord Holland's oratorical performances, though sometimes most successful, afforded no fair measure of his oratorical powers, and that, in an assembly of which the debates were frequent and animated, he would have attained a very high order of excellence. It was, indeed, impossible to listen to his conversation without seeing that he was born a debater. To him, as to his uncle, the exercise of the mind in discussion was a positive pleasure. With the greatest good nature and good breeding, he was the very opposite to an assenter. The word "disputatious" is generally used as a word of reproach; but we can express our meaning only by saying that Lord Holland was most courteously and pleasantly disputatious. In truth, his quickness in discovering and apprehending distinctions and analogies was such as a veteran judge might envy. The lawyers of the Duchy of Lancaster were astonished to find in an unprofessional man so strong a relish for the esoteric parts of their science, and complained that as soon as they had split a hair, Lord Holland proceeded to split the filaments into filaments still finer. In a mind less happily constituted, there might have been a risk

that this turn for subtilty would have produced serious evil. But in the heart and understanding of Lord Holland there was ample security against all such danger. He was not a man to be the dupe of his own ingenuity. He put his logic to its proper use; and in him the dialectician was always subordinate to the statesman.

His political life is written in the chronicles of his country. Perhaps, as we have already intimated, his opinions on two or three great questions of foreign policy were open to just objection. Yet even his errors, if he erred, were amiable and respectable. We are not sure that we do not love and admire him the more because he was now and then seduced from what we regard as a wise policy by sympathy with the oppressed, by generosity towards the fallen, by a philanthropy so enlarged that it took in all nations, by love of peace, a love which in him was second only to the love of freedom, and by the magnanimous credulity of a mind which was as incapable of suspecting as of devising mischief.

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once familiar to them, the avenue and the terrace, the busts and the paintings, the carving, the grotesque gilding, and the enigmatical mottoes. With peculiar fondness they will recall that venerable chamber, in which all the antique gravity of a college library was so singularly blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room. They will recollect, not unmoved, those shelves loaded with the varied learning of many lands and many ages, and those portraits in which were preserved the features of the best and wisest Englishmen of two generations. They will recollect how many men who have guided the politics of Europe, who have moved great assemblies by reason and eloquence, who have put life into bronze and canvass, or who have left to posterity things so written as it shall not willingly let them die, were there mixed with all that was loveliest and gayest in the society of the most splendid of capitals. They will remember the peculiar character which belonged to that circle, in which every talent and accomplishment, every art and science, had its place. They will remember how the last debate was discussed in one corner, and the last comedy of Scribe in another; while Wilkie gazed with modest admiration on Sir Joshua's Baretti; while Mackintosh turned over Thomas Aquinas to verify a quotation; while Talleyrand related his conversations with Barras at the Luxembourg, or his ride with Lannes over the field of Austerlitz. They will remember, above all, the grace, and the kindness, far more admirable than grace, with which the princely hospitality of that ancient mansion was dispensed. They will remember the venerable and benignant countenance and the cordial voice of him who bade them welcome. They will remember that temper which years of pain, of sickness, of lameness, of confinement, seemed only

to make sweeter and sweeter, and that frank politeness, which at once relieved all the embarrassment of the youngest and most timid writer or artist, who found himself for the first time among Ambassadors and Earls. They will remember that constant flow of conversation, so natural, so animated, so various, so rich with observation and anecdote; that wit which never gave a wound; that exquisite mimicry which ennobled, instead of degrading; that goodness of heart which appeared in every look and accent, and gave additional value to every talent and acquirement. They will remember, too, that he whose name they hold in reverence was not less distinguished by the inflexible uprightness of his political conduct than by his loving disposition and his winning manners. They will remember that, in the last lines which he traced, he expressed his joy that he had done nothing unworthy of the friend of Fox and Grey; and they will have reason to feel similar joy, if, in looking back on many troubled years, they cannot accuse themselves of having done any thing unworthy of men who were distinguished by the friendship of Lord Holland.

WARREN HASTINGS. (OCTOBER, 1841.)

Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of Bengal. Compiled from Original Papers, by the Rev. G. R. GLEIG, M.A. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1841.

WE are inclined to think that we shall best meet the wishes of our readers, if, instead of minutely examining this book, we attempt to give, in a way necessarily hasty and imperfect, our own view of the life and character of Mr. Hastings. Our feeling towards him is not exactly that of the House of Commons which impeached him in 1787; neither is it that of the House of Commons which uncovered and stood up to receive him in 1813. He had great qualities, and he rendered great services to the state. But to represent him as a man of stainless virtue is to make him ridiculous; and from a regard for his memory, if from no other feeling, his friends would have done well to lend no countenance to such adulation. We believe that, if he were now living, he would have sufficient judgment and sufficient greatness of mind to wish to be shown as he was. He must have known that there were dark spots on his fame. He might also have felt with pride that the splendour of his fame would bear many spots. He would have wished posterity to have a likeness of him, though an unfavourable likeness, rather than a daub at once insipid and unnatural, resembling neither him nor anybody else. "Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell,

while sitting to young Lely. "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles, I will not pay you a shilling." Even in such a trifle, the great Protector showed both his good sense and his magnanimity. He did not wish all that was characteristic in his countenance to be lost, in the vain attempt to give him the regular features and smooth blooming cheeks of the curl-pated minions of James the First. He was content that his face should go forth marked with all the blemishes which had been put on it by time, by war, by sleepless nights, by anxiety, perhaps by remorse; but with valour, policy, authority, and public care written in all its princely lines. If men truly great knew their own interest, it is thus that they would wish their minds to be portrayed.

Warren Hastings sprang from an ancient and illustrious race. It has been affirmed that his pedigree can be traced back to the great Danish sea-king, whose sails were long the terror of both coasts of the British Channel, and who, after many fierce and doubtful struggles, yielded at last to the valour and genius of Alfred. But the undoubted splendour of the line of Hastings needs no illustration from fable. One branch of that line wore, in the fourteenth century, the coronet of Pembroke. From another branch sprang the renowned Chamberlain, the faithful adherent of the White Rose, whose fate has furnished so striking a theme both to poets and to historians. His family received from the Tudors the earldom of Huntingdon, which, after long dispossession, was regained in our time by a series of events scarcely paralleled in romance.

The lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, claimed to be considered as the heads of this distinguished family. The main stock, indeed, prospered less than some of the younger shoots. But the Daylesford family, though not ennobled, was wealthy

and highly considered, till, about two hundred years ago, it was overwhelmed by the great ruin of the civil war. The Hastings of that time was a zealous cavalier. He raised money on his lands, sent his plate to the mint at Oxford, joined the royal army, and, after spending half his property in the cause of King Charles, was glad to ransom himself by making over most of the remaining half to Speaker Lenthal. The old seat at Daylesford still remained in the family; but it could no longer be kept up; and in the following generation it was sold to a merchant of London.

Before this transfer took place, the last Hastings of Daylesford had presented his second son to the rectory of the parish in which the ancient residence of the family stood. The living was of little value; and the situation of the poor clergyman, after the sale of the estate, was deplorable. He was constantly engaged in lawsuits about his tithes with the new lord of the manor, and was at length utterly ruined. His eldest son, Howard, a well conducted young man, obtained a place in the Customs. The second son, Pynaston, an idle worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife in two years, and died in the West Indies, leaving to the care of his unfortunate father a little orphan, destined to strange and memorable vicissitudes of fortune.

Warren, the son of Pynaston, was born on the sixth of December, 1732. His mother died a few days later, and he was left dependent on his distressed grandfather. The child was early sent to the village school, where he learned his letters on the same bench with the sons of the peasantry. Nor did any thing in his garb or fare indicate that his life was to take a widely different course from that of the young rustics with whom he studied and played. But no cloud could overcast the dawn of so much genius and so much ambition. The very ploughmen observed,

and long remembered, how kindly little Warren took to his book. The daily sight of the lands which his ancestors had possessed, and which had passed into the hands of strangers, filled his young brain with wild fancies and projects. He loved to hear stories of the wealth and greatness of his progenitors, of their splendid housekeeping, their loyalty, and their valour. On one bright summer day, the boy, then just seven years old, lay on the bank of the rivulet which flows through the old domain of his house to join the Isis. There, as threescore and ten years later he told the tale, rose in his mind a scheme which, through all the turns of his eventful career, was never abandoned. He would recover the estate which had belonged to his fathers. He would be Hastings of Daylesford. This purpose, formed in infancy and poverty, grew stronger as his intellect expanded and as his fortune rose. He pursued his plan with that calm but indomitable force of will which was the most striking peculiarity of his character. When, under a tropical sun, he ruled fifty millions of Asiatics, his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance, and legislation, still pointed to Daylesford. And when his long public life, so singularly chequered with good and evil, with glory and obloquy, had at length closed for ever, it was to Daylesford that he retired to die.

When he was eight years old, his uncle Howard determined to take charge of him, and to give him a liberal education. The boy went up to London, and was sent to a school at Newington, where he was well taught but ill fed. He always attributed the smallness of his stature to the hard and scanty fare of this seminary. At ten he was removed to Westminster school, then flourishing under the care of Dr. Nichols. Vinny Bourne, as his pupils affectionately called him, was one of the masters. Churchill,

Colman, Lloyd, Cumberland, Cowper, were among the students. With Cowper, Hastings formed a friendship which neither the lapse of time, nor a wide dissimilarity of opinions and pursuits, could wholly dissolve. It does not appear that they ever met after they had grown to manhood. But forty years later, when the voices of many great orators were crying for vengeance on the oppressor of India, the shy and secluded poet could image to himself Hastings the Governor-General only as the Hastings with whom he had rowed on the Thames and played in the cloister, and refused to believe that so good-tempered a fellow could have done any thing very wrong. His own life had been spent in praying, musing, and rhyming among the water-lilies of the Ouse. He had preserved in no common measure the innocence of childhood. His spirit had indeed been severely tried, but not by temptations which impelled him to any gross violation of the rules of social morality. He had never been attacked by combinations of powerful and deadly enemies. He had never been compelled to make a choice between innocence and greatness, between crime and ruin. Firmly as he held in theory the doctrine of human depravity, his habits were such that he was unable to conceive how far from the path of right even kind and noble natures may be hurried by the rage of conflict and the lust of dominion.

Hastings had another associate at Westminster of whom we shall have occasion to make frequent mention, Elijah Impey. We know little about their school days. But, we think, we may safely venture to guess that, whenever Hastings wished to play any trick more than usually naughty, he hired Impey with a tart or a ball to act as fag in the worst part of the prank.

Warren was distinguished among his comrades

as an excellent swimmer, boatman, and scholar. At fourteen he was first in the examination for the foundation. His name in gilded letters on the walls of the dormitory still attests his victory over many older competitors. He stayed two years longer at the school, and was looking forward to a studentship at Christ Church, when an event happened which changed the whole course of his life. Howard Hastings died, bequeathing his nephew to the care of a friend and distant relation, named Chiswick. This gentleman, though he did not absolutely refuse the charge, was desirous to rid himself of it as soon as possible. Dr. Nichols made strong remonstrances against the cruelty of interrupting the studies of a youth who seemed likely to be one of the first scholars of the age. He even offered to bear the expense of sending his favourite pupil to Oxford. But Mr. Chiswick was inflexible. He thought the years which had already been wasted on hexameters and pentameters quite sufficient. He had it in his power to obtain for the lad a writership in the service of the East India Company. Whether the young adventurer, when once shipped off, made a fortune, or died of a liver complaint, he equally ceased to be a burden to anybody. Warren was accordingly removed from Westminster school, and placed for a few months at a commercial academy, to study arithmetic and book-keeping. In January, 1750, a few days after he had completed his seventeenth year, he sailed for Bengal, and arrived at his destination in the October following.

He was immediately placed at a desk in the Secretary's office at Calcutta, and laboured there during two years. Fort William was then a purely commercial settlement. In the south of India the encroaching policy of Dupleix had transformed the servants of the English Company, against their will, into diplomatists and generals. The war of the

succession was raging in the Carnatic; and the tide had been suddenly turned against the French by the genius of young Robert Clive. But in Bengal the European settlers, at peace with the natives and with each other, were wholly occupied with ledgers and bills of lading.

After two years passed in keeping accounts at Calcutta, Hastings was sent up the country to Cossimbazar, a town which lies on the Hoogley, about a mile from Moorshedabad, and which then bore to Moorshedabad a relation, if we may compare small things with great, such as the city of London bears to Westminster. Moorshedabad was the abode of the prince who, by an authority ostensibly derived from the Mogul, but really independent, ruled the three great provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar. At Moorshedabad were the court, the haram, and the public offices. Cossimbazar was a port and a place of trade, renowned for the quantity and excellence of the silks which were sold in its marts, and constantly receiving and sending forth fleets of richly laden barges. At this important point, the Company had established a small factory subordinate to that of Fort William. Here, during several years, Hastings was employed in making bargains for stuffs with native brokers. While he was thus engaged, Surajah Dowlah succeeded to the government, and declared war against the English. The defenceless settlement of Cossimbazar, lying close to the tyrant's capital, was instantly seized. Hastings was sent a prisoner to Moorshedabad, but, in consequence of the humane intervention of the servants of the Dutch Company, was treated with indulgence. Meanwhile the Nabob marched on Calcutta; the governor and the commandant fled; the town and citadel were taken, and most of the English prisoners perished in the Black Hole.

In these events originated the greatness of Warren Hastings. The fugitive governor and his companions had taken refuge on the dreary islet of Fulda, near the mouth of the Hoogley. They were naturally desirous to obtain full information respecting the proceedings of the Nabob; and no person seemed so likely to furnish it as Hastings, who was a prisoner at large in the immediate neighbourhood of the court. He thus became a diplomatic agent, and soon established a high character for ability and resolution. The treason which at a later period was fatal to Surajah Dowlah was already in progress; and Hastings was admitted to the deliberations of the conspirators. But the time for striking had not arrived. It was necessary to postpone the execution of the design; and Hastings, who was now in extreme peril, fled to Fulda.

Soon after his arrival at Fulda, the expedition from Madras, commanded by Clive, appeared in the Hoogley. Warren, young, intrepid, and excited probably by the example of the Commander of the Forces who, having like himself been a mercantile agent of the Company, had been turned by public calamities into a soldier, determined to serve in the ranks. During the early operations of the war he carried a musket. But the quick eye of Clive soon perceived that the head of the young volunteer would be more useful than his arm. When, after the battle of Plassey, Meer Jaffier was proclaimed Nabob of Bengal, Hastings was appointed to reside at the court of the new prince as agent for the Company.

He remained at Moorshedabad till the year 1761, when he became a member of Council, and was consequently forced to reside at Calcutta. This was during the interval between Clive's first and second administration, an interval which has left on the fame of the East India Company a stain, not wholly effaced by

many years of just and humane government. Mr. Vansittart, the Governor, was at the head of a new and anomalous empire. On the one side was a band of English functionaries, daring, intelligent, eager to be rich. On the other side was a great native population, helpless, timid, accustomed to crouch under oppression. To keep the stronger race from preying on the weaker was an undertaking which tasked to the utmost the talents and energy of Clive. Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. The master caste, as was natural, broke loose from all restraint; and then was seen what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles, the strength of civilisation without its mercy. To all other despotism there is a check, imperfect indeed, and liable to gross abuse, but still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance, when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment such as then afflicted Bengal it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence and energy of the dominant class made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against dæmons. The only protection which the conquered could find was in the moderation, the clemency, the enlarged policy of the conquerors. That protection, at a later period, they found. But at first English power came among them unaccompanied by English morality. There was an interval between the time at which they became our subjects, and the time at which we began to reflect that we were bound to discharge towards them the duties of rulers. During that interval the business of a servant

of the Company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds as speedily as possible, that he might return home before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, to buy rotten boroughs in Cornwall, and to give balls in St. James's Square. Of the conduct of Hastings at this time, little is known; but the little that is known, and the circumstance that little is known, must be considered as honourable to him. He could not protect the natives: all that he could do was to abstain from plundering and oppressing them; and this he appears to have done. It is certain that at this time he continued poor; and it is equally certain, that by cruelty and dishonesty he might easily have become rich. It is certain that he was never charged with having borne a share in the worst abuses which then prevailed; and it is almost equally certain that, if he had borne a share in those abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt. The keen, severe, and even malevolent scrutiny to which his whole public life was subjected, a scrutiny unparalleled, as we believe, in the history of mankind, is in one respect advantageous to his reputation. It brought many lamentable blemishes to light; but it entitles him to be considered pure from every blemish which has not been brought to light.

The truth is that the temptations to which so many English functionaries yielded in the time of Mr. Vansittart were not temptations addressed to the ruling passions of Warren Hastings. He was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions; but he was neither sordid nor rapacious. He was far too enlightened a man to look on a great empire merely as a buccaneer would look on a galleon. Had his heart been much worse than it was, his understanding would have preserved him from that extremity

of baseness. He was an unscrupulous, perhaps an unprincipled statesman; but still he was a statesman, and not a freebooter.

In 1764 Hastings returned to England. He had realised only a very moderate fortune; and that moderate fortune was soon reduced to nothing, partly by his praiseworthy liberality, and partly by his mismanagement. Towards his relations he appears to have acted very generously. The greater part of his savings he left in Bengal, hoping probably to obtain the high usury of India. But high usury and bad security generally go together; and Hastings lost both interest and principal.

He remained four years in England. Of his life at this time very little is known. But it has been asserted, and is highly probable, that liberal studies and the society of men of letters occupied a great part of his time. It is to be remembered to his honour, that in days when the languages of the East were regarded by other servants of the Company merely as the means of communicating with weavers and money-changers, his enlarged and accomplished mind sought in Asiatic learning for new forms of intellectual enjoyment, and for new views of government and society. Perhaps, like most persons who have paid much attention to departments of knowledge which lie out of the common track, he was inclined to overrate the value of his favourite studies. He conceived that the cultivation of Persian literature might with advantage be made a part of the liberal education of an English gentleman; and he drew up a plan with that view. It is said that the University of Oxford, in which Oriental learning had never, since the revival of letters, been wholly neglected, was to be the seat of the institution which he contemplated. An endowment was expected from the munificence of the Company; and professors thoroughly

competent to interpret Hafiz and Ferdusi were to be engaged in the East. Hastings called on Johnson, with the hope, as it should seem, of interesting in this project a man who enjoyed the highest literary reputation, and who was particularly connected with Oxford. The interview appears to have left on Johnson's mind a most favourable impression of the talents and attainments of his visitor. Long after, when Hastings was ruling the immense population of British India, the old philosopher wrote to him, and referred in the most courtly terms, though with great dignity, to their short but agreeable intercourse.

Hastings soon began to look again towards India. He had little to attach him to England; and his pecuniary embarrassments were great. He solicited his old masters the Directors for employment. They acceded to his request, with high compliments both to his abilities and to his integrity, and appointed him a Member of Council at Madras. It would be unjust not to mention that, though forced to borrow money for his outfit, he did not withdraw any portion of the sum which he had appropriated to the relief of his distressed relations. In the spring of 1769 he embarked on board of the Duke of Grafton, and commenced a voyage distinguished by incidents which might furnish matter for a novel.

Among the passengers in the Duke of Grafton was a German of the name of Imhoff. He called himself a baron; but he was in distressed circumstances, and was going out to Madras as a portrait-painter, in the hope of picking up some of the pagodas which were then lightly got and as lightly spent by the English in India. The baron was accompanied by his wife, a native, we have somewhere read, of Archangel. This young woman, who, born under the Arctic circle, was destined to play the part of a Queen under the tropic of Cancer, had an agreeable

person, a cultivated mind, and manners in the highest degree engaging. She despised her husband heartily, and, as the story which we have to tell sufficiently proves, not without reason. She was interested by the conversation and flattered by the attentions of Hastings. The situation was indeed perilous. No place is so propitious to the formation either of close friendships or of deadly enmities as an Indiaman. There are very few people who do not find a voyage which lasts several months insupportably dull. Any thing is welcome which may break that long monotony, a sail, a shark, an albatross, a man overboard. Most passengers find some resource in eating twice as many meals as on land. But the great devices for killing the time are quarrelling and flirting. The facilities for both these exciting pursuits are great. The inmates of the ship are thrown together far more than in any country-seat or boarding-house. None can escape from the rest except by imprisoning himself in a cell in which he can hardly turn. All food, all exercise, is taken in company. Ceremony is to a great extent banished. It is every day in the power of a mischievous person to inflict innumerable annoyances; it is every day in the power of an amiable person to confer little services. It not seldom happens that serious distress and danger call forth in genuine beauty and deformity heroic virtues and abject vices which, in the ordinary intercourse of good society, might remain during many years unknown even to intimate associates. Under such circumstances met Warren Hastings and the Baroness Imhoff, two persons whose accomplishments would have attracted notice in any court of Europe. The gentleman had no domestic ties. The lady was tied to a husband for whom she had no regard, and who had no regard for his own honour. An attachment sprang up, which was soon strengthened by events

such as could hardly have occurred on land. Hastings fell ill. The baroness nursed him with womanly tenderness, gave him his medicines with her own hand, and even sat up in his cabin while he slept. Long before the Duke of Grafton reached Madras, Hastings was in love. But his love was of a most characteristic description. Like his hatred, like his ambition, like all his passions, it was strong, but not impetuous. It was calm, deep, earnest, patient of delay, unconquerable by time. Imhoff was called into council by his wife and his wife's lover. It was arranged that the baroness should institute a suit for a divorce in the courts of Franconia, that the baron should afford every facility to the proceeding, and that, during the years which might elapse before the sentence should be pronounced, they should continue to live together. It was also agreed that Hastings should bestow some very substantial marks of gratitude on the complaisant husband, and should, when the marriage was dissolved, make the lady his wife, and adopt the children whom she had already borne to Imhoff.

At Madras, Hastings found the trade of the Company in a very disorganised state. His own tastes would have led him rather to political than to commercial pursuits: but he knew that the favour of his employers depended chiefly on their dividends, and that their dividends depended chiefly on the investment. He therefore, with great judgment, determined to apply his vigorous mind for a time to this department of business, which had been much neglected, since the servants of the Company had ceased to be clerks, and had become warriors and negotiators.

In a very few months he effected an important reform. The Directors notified to him their high approbation, and were so much pleased with his

conduct that they determined to place him at the head of the government of Bengal. Early in 1772 he quitted Fort St. George for his new post. The Imhoffs, who were still man and wife, accompanied him, and lived at Calcutta on the same plan which they had already followed during more than two years.

When Hastings took his seat at the head of the council-board, Bengal was still governed according to the system which Clive had devised, a system which was, perhaps, skilfully contrived for the purpose of facilitating and concealing a great revolution, but which, when that revolution was complete and irrevocable, could produce nothing but inconvenience. There were two governments, the real and the ostensible. The supreme power belonged to the Company, and was in truth the most despotic power that can be conceived. The only restraint on the English masters of the country was that which their own justice and humanity imposed on them. There was no constitutional check on their will, and resistance to them was utterly hopeless.

But, though thus absolute in reality, the English had not yet assumed the style of sovereignty. They held their territories as vassals of the throne of Delhi; they raised their revenues as collectors appointed by the imperial commission; their public seal was inscribed with the imperial titles; and their mint struck only the imperial coin.

There was still a nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his country in the same relation in which Augustulus stood to Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and Pepin. He lived at Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of reverence, and his name was used in public instruments. But in the government of the country he

had less real share than the youngest writer or cadet in the Company's service.

The English council which represented the Company at Calcutta was constituted on a very different plan from that which has since been adopted. At present the Governor is, as to all executive measures, absolute. He can declare war, conclude peace, appoint public functionaries or remove them, in opposition to the unanimous sense of those who sit with him in council. They are, indeed, entitled to know all that is done, to discuss all that is done, to advise, to remonstrate, to send protests to England. But it is with the Governor that the supreme power resides, and on him that the whole responsibility rests. This system, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Burke, we conceive to be on the whole the best that was ever devised for the government of a country where no materials can be found for a representative constitution. In the time of Hastings the Governor had only one vote in council, and, in case of an equal division, a casting vote. It therefore happened not unfrequently that he was overruled on the gravest questions; and it was possible that he might be wholly excluded, for years together, from the real direction of public affairs.

The English functionaries at Fort William had as yet paid little or no attention to the internal government of Bengal. The only branch of politics about which they much busied themselves was negotiation with the native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collection of revenue, were almost entirely neglected. We may remark that the phraseology of the Company's servants still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word "political" as synonymous with "diplomatic." We could name a gentleman

still living, who was described by the highest authority as an invaluable public servant, eminently fit to be at the head of the internal administration of a whole presidency, but unfortunately quite ignorant of all political business.

The internal government of Bengal the English rulers delegated to a great native minister, who was stationed at Moorshedabad. All military affairs, and, with the exception of what pertains to mere ceremonial, all foreign affairs, were withdrawn from his control; but the other departments of the administration were entirely confided to him. His own stipend amounted to near a hundred thousand pounds sterling a year. The personal allowance of the nabob, amounting to more than three hundred thousand pounds a year, passed through the minister's hands, and was, to a great extent, at his disposal. The collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the maintenance of order, were left to this high functionary; and for the exercise of his immense power he was responsible to none but the British masters of the country.

A situation so important, lucrative, and splendid, was naturally an object of ambition to the ablest and most powerful natives. Clive had found it difficult to decide between conflicting pretensions. Two candidates stood out prominently from the crowd, each of them the representative of a race and of a religion.

One of these was Mahommed Reza Khan, a Mussulman of Persian extraction, able, active, religious after the fashion of his people, and highly esteemed by them. In England he might perhaps have been regarded as a corrupt and greedy politician. But, tried by the lower standard of Indian morality, he might be considered as a man of integrity and honour.

His competitor was a Hindoo Brahmin whose name has, by a terrible and melancholy event, been inseparably associated with that of Warren Hastings, the Maharajah Nuncomar. This man had played an important part in all the revolutions which, since the time of Surajah Dowlah, had taken place in Bengal. To the consideration which in that country belongs to high and pure caste, he added the weight which is derived from wealth, talents, and experience. Of his moral character it is difficult to give a notion to those who are acquainted with human nature only as it appears in our island. What the Italian is to the Englishman, what the Hindoo is to the Italian, what the Bengalee is to other Hindoos, that was Nuncomar to other Bengalees. The physical organisation of the Bengalee is feeble even to effeminacy. He lives in a constant vapour bath. His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movements languid. During many ages he has been trampled upon by men of bolder and more hardy breeds. Courage, independence, veracity, are qualities to which his constitution and his situation are equally unfavourable. His mind bears a singular analogy to his body. It is weak even to helplessness, for purposes of manly resistance; but its suppleness and its tact move the children of sterner climates to admiration not unmingled with contempt. All those arts which are the natural defence of the weak are more familiar to this subtle race than to the Ionian of the time of Juvenal, or to the Jew of the dark ages. What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty, according to the old Greek song, is to woman, deceit is to the Bengalee. Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery, are the weapons, offensive and defensive, of the people of the Lower Ganges. All those millions

do not furnish one sepoy to the armies of the Company. But as usurers, as money-changers, as sharp legal practitioners, no class of human beings can bear a comparison with them. With all his softness, the Bengalee is by no means placable in his enmities or prone to pity. The pertinacity with which he adheres to his purposes yields only to the immediate pressure of fear. Nor does he lack a certain kind of courage which is often wanting to his masters. To inevitable evils he is sometimes found to oppose a passive fortitude, such as the Stoics attributed to their ideal sage. An European warrior who rushes on a battery of cannon with a loud hurrah will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall into an agony of despair at the sentence of death. But the Bengalee who would see his country overrun, his house laid in ashes, his children murdered or dishonoured, without having the spirit to strike one blow, has yet been known to endure torture with the firmness of Mucius, and to mount the scaffold with the steady step and even pulse of Algernon Sydney.

In Nuncomar the national character was strongly and with exaggeration personified. The Company's servants had repeatedly detected him in the most criminal intrigues. On one occasion he brought a false charge against another Hindoo, and tried to substantiate it by producing forged documents. On another occasion it was discovered that, while professing the strongest attachment to the English, he was engaged in several conspiracies against them, and in particular that he was the medium of a correspondence between the Court of Delhi and the French authorities in the Carnatic. For these and similar practices he had been long detained in confinement. But his talents and influence had not only procured his liberation, but had obtained for him a certain

degree of consideration even among the British rulers of his country.

Clive was extremely unwilling to place a Mussulman at the head of the administration of Bengal. On the other hand, he could not bring himself to confer immense power on a man to whom every sort of villany had repeatedly been brought home. Therefore, though the nabob, over whom Nuncomar had by intrigue acquired great influence, begged that the artful Hindoo might be entrusted with the government, Clive, after some hesitation, decided honestly and wisely in favour of Mahommed Reza Khan. When Hastings became Governor, Mahommed Reza Khan had held power seven years. An infant son of Meer Jaffier was now nabob; and the guardianship of the young prince's person had been confided to the minister.

Nuncomar, stimulated at once by cupidity and malice, had been constantly attempting to hurt his successful rival. This was not difficult. The revenues of Bengal, under the administration established by Clive, did not yield such a surplus as had been anticipated by the Company; for, at that time, the most absurd notions were entertained in England respecting the wealth of India. Palaces of porphyry, hung with the richest brocade, heaps of pearls and diamonds, vaults from which pagodas and gold mohurs were measured out by the bushel, filled the imagination even of men of business. Nobody seemed to be aware of what nevertheless was most undoubtedly the truth, that India was a poorer country than countries which in Europe are reckoned poor, than Ireland, for example, or than Portugal. It was confidently believed by lords of the treasury and members for the city that Bengal would not only defray its own charges, but would afford an increased dividend to the proprietors of India stock, and large

relief to the English finances. These absurd expectations were disappointed; and the directors, naturally enough, chose to attribute the disappointment rather to the mismanagement of Mahommed Reza Khan than to their own ignorance of the country entrusted to their care. They were confirmed in their error by the agents of Nuncomar; for Nuncomar had agents even in Leadenhall Street. Soon after Hastings reached Calcutta, he received a letter addressed by the Court of Directors, not to the council generally, but to himself in particular. He was directed to remove Mahommed Reza Khan, to arrest him, together with all his family and all his partisans, and to institute a strict inquiry into the whole administration of the province. It was added that the Governor would do well to avail himself of the assistance of Nuncomar in the investigation. The vices of Nuncomar were acknowledged. But even from his vices, it was said, much advantage might at such a conjuncture be derived; and, though he could not safely be trusted, it might still be proper to encourage him by hopes of reward.

The Governor bore no good will to Nuncomar. Many years before, they had known each other at Moorshedabad; and then a quarrel had risen between them which all the authority of their superiors could hardly compose. Widely as they differed in most points, they resembled each other in this, that both were men of unforgiving natures. To Mahommed Reza Khan, on the other hand, Hastings had no feelings of hostility. Nevertheless he proceeded to execute the instructions of the Company with an alacrity which he never showed, except when instructions were in perfect conformity with his own views. He had, wisely, as we think, determined to get rid of the system of double government in Bengal. The orders of the Directors furnished him with the means

of effecting his purpose, and dispensed him from the necessity of discussing the matter with his council. He took his measures with his usual vigour and dexterity. At midnight, the palace of Mahommed Reza Khan at Moorshedabad was surrounded by a battalion of sepoys. The minister was roused from his slumbers, and informed that he was a prisoner. With the Mussulman gravity, he bent his head and submitted himself to the will of God. He fell not alone. A chief named Schitab Roy had been entrusted with the government of Bahar. His valour and his attachment to the English had more than once been signally proved. On that memorable day on which the people of Patna saw from their walls the whole army of the Mogul scattered by the little band of Captain Knox, the voice of the British conquerors assigned the palm of gallantry to the brave Asiatic. "I never," said Knox, when he introduced Schitab Roy, covered with blood and dust, to the English functionaries assembled in the factory, "I never saw a native fight so before." Schitab Roy was involved in the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan, was removed from office, and was placed under arrest. The members of the council received no intimation of these measures till the prisoners were on their road to Calcutta.

The inquiry into the conduct of the minister was postponed on different pretences. He was detained in an easy confinement during many months. In the meantime, the great revolution which Hastings had planned was carried into effect. The office of minister was abolished. The internal administration was transferred to the servants of the Company. A system, a very imperfect system, it is true, of civil and criminal justice, under English superintendence, was established. The nabob was no longer to have even an ostensible share in the government; but he

was still to receive a considerable annual allowance, and to be surrounded with the state of sovereignty. As he was an infant, it was necessary to provide guardians for his person and property. His person was entrusted to a lady of his father's haram, known by the name of the Munny Begum. The office of treasurer of the household was bestowed on a son of Nuncomar, named Goordas. Nuncomar's services were wanted, yet he could not safely be trusted with power; and Hastings thought it a masterstroke of policy to reward the able and unprincipled parent by promoting the inoffensive child.

The revolution completed, the double government dissolved, the Company installed in the full sovereignty of Bengal, Hastings had no motive to treat the late ministers with rigour. Their trial had been put off on various pleas till the new organisation was complete. They were then brought before a committee, over which the Governor presided. Schitab Roy was speedily acquitted with honour. A formal apology was made to him for the restraint to which he had been subjected. All the Eastern marks of respect were bestowed on him. He was clothed in a robe of state, presented with jewels and with a richly harnessed elephant, and sent back to his government at Patna. But his health had suffered from confinement; his high spirit had been cruelly wounded; and soon after his liberation he died of a broken heart.

The innocence of Mahommed Reza Khan was not so clearly established. But the Governor was not disposed to deal harshly. After a long hearing, in which Nuncomar appeared as the accuser, and displayed both the art and the inveterate rancour which distinguished him, Hastings pronounced that the charges had not been made out, and ordered the fallen minister to be set at liberty.

Nuncomar had purposed to destroy the Mussulman administration, and to rise on its ruin. Both his malevolence and his cupidity had been disappointed. Hastings had made him a tool, had used him for the purpose of accomplishing the transfer of the government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, from native to European hands. The rival, the enemy, so long envied, so implacably persecuted, had been dismissed unhurt. The situation so long and ardently desired had been abolished. It was natural that the Governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin. As yet, however, it was necessary to suppress such feelings. The time was coming when that long animosity was to end in a desperate and deadly struggle.

In the meantime, Hastings was compelled to turn his attention to foreign affairs. The object of his diplomacy was at this time simply to get money. The finances of his government were in an embarrassed state; and this embarrassment he was determined to relieve by some means, fair or foul. The principle which directed all his dealings with his neighbours is fully expressed by the old motto of one of the great predatory families of Teviotdale, "Thou shalt want ere I want." He seems to have laid it down, as a fundamental proposition which could not be disputed, that when he had not as many lacs of rupees as the public service required, he was to take them from anybody who had. One thing, indeed, is to be said in excuse for him. The pressure applied to him by his employers at home, was such as only the highest virtue could have withstood, such as left him no choice except to commit great wrongs, or to resign his high post, and with that post all his hopes of fortune and distinction. The Directors, it is true, never enjoined or applauded any crime. Far from it. Whoever examines their letters written at

that time will find there many just and humane sentiments, many excellent precepts, in short, an admirable code of political ethics. But every exhortation is modified or nullified by a demand for money. "Govern leniently, and send more money; practise strict justice and moderation towards neighbouring powers, and send more money;" this is in truth the sum of almost all the instructions that Hastings ever received from home. Now these instructions, being interpreted, mean simply, "Be the father and the oppressor of the people; be just and unjust, moderate and rapacious." The Directors dealt with India, as the church, in the good old times, dealt with a heretic. They delivered the victim over to the executioners, with an earnest request that all possible tenderness might be shown. We by no means accuse or suspect those who framed these despatches of hypocrisy. It is probable that, writing fifteen thousand miles from the place where their orders were to be carried into effect, they never perceived the gross inconsistency of which they were guilty. But the inconsistency was at once manifest to their vicegerent at Calcutta, who, with an empty treasury, with an unpaid army, with his own salary often in arrear, with deficient crops, with government tenants daily running away, was called upon to remit home another half million without fail. Hastings saw that it was absolutely necessary for him to disregard either the moral discourses or the pecuniary requisitions of his employers. Being forced to disobey them in something, he had to consider what kind of disobedience they would most readily pardon; and he correctly judged that the safest course would be to neglect the sermons and to find the rupees.

A mind so fertile as his, and so little restrained by conscientious scruples, speedily discovered several modes of relieving the financial embarrassments of

the government. The allowance of the Nabob of Bengal was reduced at a stroke from three hundred and twenty thousand pounds a year to half that sum. The Company had bound itself to pay near three hundred thousand pounds a year to the Great Mogul, as a mark of homage for the provinces which he had entrusted to their care; and they had ceded to him the districts of Corah and Allahabad. On the plea that the Mogul was not really independent, but merely a tool in the hands of others, Hastings determined to retract these concessions. He accordingly declared that the English would pay no more tribute, and sent troops to occupy Allahabad and Corah. The situation of these places was such, that there would be little advantage and great expense in retaining them. Hastings, who wanted money and not territory, determined to sell them. A purchaser was not wanting. The rich province of Oude had, in the general dissolution of the Mogul Empire, fallen to the share of the great Mussulman house by which it is still governed. About twenty years ago, this house, by the permission of the British government, assumed the royal title; but, in the time of Warren Hastings, such an assumption would have been considered by the Mahommedans of India as a monstrous impiety. The Prince of Oude, though he held the power, did not venture to use the style of sovereignty. To the appellation of Nabob or Viceroy, he added that of Vizier of the monarchy of Hindostan, just as in the last century the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, though independent of the Emperor, and often in arms against him, were proud to style themselves his Grand Chamberlain and Grand Marshal. Sujah Dowlah, then Nabob Vizier, was on excellent terms with the English. He had a large treasure. Allahabad and Corah were so situated that they might be of use to him and could be of none to the Company.

The buyer and seller soon came to an understanding; and the provinces which had been torn from the Mogul were made over to the government of Oude for about half a million sterling.

But there was another matter still more important to be settled by the Vizier and the Governor. The fate of a brave people was to be decided. It was decided in a manner which has left a lasting stain on the fame of Hastings and of England.

The people of Central Asia had always been to the inhabitants of India what the warriors of the German forests were to the subjects of the decaying monarchy of Rome. The dark, slender, and timid Hindoo shrank from a conflict with the strong muscle and resolute spirit of the fair race, which dwelt beyond the passes. There is reason to believe that, at a period anterior to the dawn of regular history, the people who spoke the rich and flexible Sanscrit came from regions lying far beyond the Hyphasis and the Hydaspes, and imposed their yoke on the children of the soil. It is certain that, during the last ten centuries, a succession of invaders descended from the west on Hindostan; nor was the course of conquest ever turned back towards the setting sun, till that memorable campaign in which the cross of Saint George was planted on the walls of Ghizni.

The Emperors of Hindostan themselves came from the other side of the great mountain ridge; and it had always been their practice to recruit their army from the hardy and valiant race from which their own illustrious house sprang. Among the military adventurers who were allured to the Mogul standards from the neighbourhood of Cabul and Candahar, were conspicuous several gallant bands, known by the name of the Rohillas. Their services had been rewarded with large tracts of land, fiefs of the spear, if we may use an expression drawn from an analogous

state of things, in that fertile plain through which the Ramgunga flows from the snowy heights of Kumaon to join the Ganges. In the general confusion which followed the death of Aurungzebe, the warlike colony became virtually independent. The Rohillas were distinguished from the other inhabitants of India by a peculiarly fair complexion. They were more honourably distinguished by courage in war, and by skill in the arts of peace. While anarchy raged from Lahore to Cape Comorin, their little territory enjoyed the blessings of repose under the guardianship of valour. Agriculture and commerce flourished among them; nor were they negligent of rhetoric and poetry. Many persons now living have heard aged men talk with regret of the golden days when the Afghan princes ruled in the vale of Rohilcund.

Sujah Dowlah had set his heart on adding this rich district to his own principality. Right, or show of right, he had absolutely none. His claim was in no respect better founded than that of Catherine to Poland, or that of the Bonaparte family to Spain. The Rohillas held their country by exactly the same title by which he held his, and had governed their country far better than his had ever been governed. Nor were they a people whom it was perfectly safe to attack. Their land was indeed an open plain, destitute of natural defences; but their veins were full of the high blood of Afghanistan. As soldiers, they had not the steadiness which is seldom found except in company with strict discipline; but their impetuous valour had been proved on many fields of battle. It was said that their chiefs, when united by common peril, could bring eighty thousand men into the field. Sujah Dowlah had himself seen them fight, and wisely shrank from a conflict with them. There was in India one army, and only one, against which even those proud Caucasian tribes could not

stand. It had been abundantly proved that neither tenfold odds, nor the martial ardour of the boldest Asiatic nations, could avail aught against English science and resolution. Was it possible to induce the Governor of Bengal to let out to hire the irresistible energies of the imperial people, the skill against which the ablest chiefs of Hindostan were helpless as infants, the discipline which had so often triumphed over the frantic struggles of fanaticism and despair, the unconquerable British courage which is never so sedate and stubborn as towards the close of a doubtful and murderous day?

This was what the Nabob Vizier asked, and what Hastings granted. A bargain was soon struck. Each of the negotiators had what the other wanted. Hastings was in need of funds to carry on the government of Bengal, and to send remittances to London; and Sujah Dowlah had an ample revenue. Sujah Dowlah was bent on subjugating the Rohillas; and Hastings had at his disposal the only force by which the Rohillas could be subjugated. It was agreed that an English army should be lent to the Nabob Vizier, and that, for the loan, he should pay four hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides defraying all the charge of the troops while employed in his service.

"I really cannot see," says Mr. Gleig, "upon what grounds, either of political or moral justice, this proposition deserves to be stigmatised as infamous." If we understand the meaning of words, it is infamous to commit a wicked action for hire, and it is wicked to engage in war without provocation. In this particular war, scarcely one aggravating circumstance was wanting. The object of the Rohilla war was this, to deprive a large population, who had never done us the least harm, of a good government, and to place them, against their will, under an execrably bad one. Nay, even this is not all. Eng-

land now descended far below the level even of those petty German princes who, about the same time, sold us troops to fight the Americans. The hussar-mongers of Hesse and Anspach had at least the assurance that the expeditions on which their soldiers were to be employed would be conducted in conformity with the humane rules of civilised warfare. Was the Rohilla war likely to be so conducted? Did the Governor stipulate that it should be so conducted? He well knew what Indian warfare was. He well knew that the power which he covenanted to put into Sujah Dowlah's hands would, in all probability, be atrociously abused; and he required no guarantee, no promise that it should not be so abused. He did not even reserve to himself the right of withdrawing his aid in case of abuse, however gross. We are almost ashamed to notice Major Scott's absurd plea, that Hastings was justified in letting out English troops to slaughter the Rohillas, because the Rohillas were not of Indian race, but a colony from a distant country. What were the English themselves? Was it for them to proclaim a crusade for the expulsion of all intruders from the countries watered by the Ganges? Did it lie in their mouths to contend that a foreign settler who establishes an empire in India is a *caput lupinum?* What would they have said if any other power had, on such a ground, attacked Madras or Calcutta, without the slightest provocation? Such a defence was wanting to make the infamy of the transaction complete. The atrocity of the crime, and the hypocrisy of the apology, are worthy of each other.

One of the three brigades of which the Bengal army consisted was sent under Colonel Champion to join Sujah Dowlah's forces. The Rohillas expostulated, entreated, offered a large ransom, but in vain. They then resolved to defend themselves to the last.

A bloody battle was fought. "The enemy," says Colonel Champion, "gave proof of a good share of military knowledge; and it is impossible to describe a more obstinate firmness of resolution than they displayed." The dastardly sovereign of Oude fled from the field. The English were left unsupported; but their fire and their charge were irresistible. It was not, however, till the most distinguished chiefs had fallen, fighting bravely at the head of their troops, that the Rohilla ranks gave way. Then the Nabob Vizier and his rabble made their appearance, and hastened to plunder the camp of the valiant enemies, whom they had never dared to look in the face. The soldiers of the Company, trained in an exact discipline, kept unbroken order, while the tents were pillaged by these worthless allies. But many voices were heard to exclaim, "We have had all the fighting, and those rogues are to have all the profit."

Then the horrors of Indian war were let loose on the fair valleys and cities of Rohilcund. The whole country was in a blaze. More than a hundred thousand people fled from their homes to pestilential jungles, preferring famine, and fever, and the haunts of tigers, to the tyranny of him, to whom an English and a Christian government had, for shameful lucre, sold their substance, and their blood, and the honour of their wives and daughters. Colonel Champion remonstrated with the Nabob Vizier, and sent strong representations to Fort William; but the Governor had made no conditions as to the mode in which the war was to be carried on. He had troubled himself about nothing but his forty lacs; and, though he might disapprove of Sujah Dowlah's wanton barbarity, he did not think himself entitled to interfere, except by offering advice. This delicacy excites the admiration of the biographer. "Mr. Hastings," he says, "could not himself dictate to the Nabob, nor permit

the commander of the Company's troops to dictate how the war was to be carried on." No, to be sure. Mr. Hastings had only to put down by main force the brave struggles of innocent men fighting for their liberty. Their military resistance crushed, his duties ended; and he had then only to fold his arms and look on, while their villages were burned, their children butchered, and their women violated. Will Mr. Gleig seriously maintain this opinion? Is any rule more plain than this, that whoever voluntarily gives to another irresistible power over human beings is bound to take order that such power shall not be barbarously abused? But we beg pardon of our readers for arguing a point so clear.

We hasten to the end of this sad and disgraceful story. The war ceased. The finest population in India was subjected to a greedy, cowardly, cruel tyrant. Commerce and agriculture languished. The rich province which had tempted the cupidity of Sujah Dowlah became the most miserable part even of his miserable dominions. Yet is the injured nation not extinct. At long intervals gleams of its ancient spirit have flashed forth; and even at this day, valour and self-respect, and a chivalrous feeling rare among Asiatics, and a bitter remembrance of the great crime of England, distinguish that noble Afghan race. To this day they are regarded as the best of all sepoys at the cold steel; and it was very recently remarked, by one who had enjoyed great opportunities of observation, that the only natives of India to whom the word "gentleman" can with perfect propriety be applied are to be found among the Rohillas.

Whatever we may think of the morality of Hastings, it cannot be denied that the financial results of his policy did honour to his talents. In less than two years after he assumed the government, he had, without imposing any additional burdens on

the people subject to his authority, added about four hundred and fifty thousand pounds to the annual income of the Company, besides procuring about a million in ready money. He had also relieved the finances of Bengal from military expenditure, amounting to near a quarter of a million a year, and had thrown that charge on the Nabob of Oude. There can be no doubt that this was a result which, if it had been obtained by honest means, would have entitled him to the warmest gratitude of his country, and which, by whatever means obtained, proved that he possessed great talents for administration.

In the meantime, Parliament had been engaged in long and grave discussions on Asiatic affairs. The ministry of Lord North, in the session of 1773, introduced a measure which made a considerable change in the constitution of the Indian government. This law, known by the name of the Regulating Act, provided that the presidency of Bengal should exercise a control over the other possessions of the Company; that the chief of that presidency should be styled Governor-General; that he should be assisted by four Councillors; and that a supreme court of judicature, consisting of a chief justice and three inferior judges, should be established at Calcutta. This court was made independent of the Governor-General and Council, and was entrusted with a civil and criminal jurisdiction of immense and, at the same time, of undefined extent.

The Governor-General and Councillors were named in the act, and were to hold their situations for five years. Hastings was to be the first Governor-General. One of the four new Councillors, Mr. Barwell, an experienced servant of the Company, was then in India. The other three, General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, were sent out from England.

The ablest of the new Councillors was, beyond all doubt, Philip Francis. His acknowledged compositions prove that he possessed considerable eloquence and information. Several years passed in the public offices had formed him to habits of business. His enemies have never denied that he had a fearless and manly spirit; and his friends, we are afraid, must acknowledge that his estimate of himself was extravagantly high, that his temper was irritable, that his deportment was often rude and petulant, and that his hatred was of intense bitterness and long duration.

It is scarcely possible to mention this eminent man without adverting for a moment to the question which his name at once suggests to every mind. Was he the author of the Letters of Junius? Our own firm belief is that he was. The evidence is, we think, such as would support a verdict in a civil, nay, in a criminal proceeding. The handwriting of Junius is the very peculiar handwriting of Francis, slightly disguised. As to the position, pursuits, and connexions of Junius, the following are the most important facts which can be considered as clearly proved: first, that he was acquainted with the technical forms of the secretary of state's office; secondly, that he was intimately acquainted with the business of the war office; thirdly, that he, during the year 1770, attended debates in the House of Lords, and took notes of speeches, particularly of the speeches of Lord Chatham; fourthly, that he bitterly resented the appointment of Mr. Chamier to the place of deputy secretary-at-war; fifthly, that he was bound by some strong tie to the first Lord Holland. Now, Francis passed some years in the secretary of state's office. He was subsequently chief clerk of the war office. He repeatedly mentioned that he had himself, in 1770, heard speeches of Lord Chatham; and some of these speeches were actually printed from his notes.

He resigned his clerkship at the war office from resentment at the appointment of Mr. Chamier. It was by Lord Holland that he was first introduced into the public service. Now, here are five marks, all of which ought to be found in Junius. They are all five found in Francis. We do not believe that more than two of them can be found in any other person whatever. If this argument does not settle the question, there is an end of all reasoning on circumstantial evidence.

The internal evidence seems to us to point the same way. The style of Francis bears a strong resemblance to that of Junius; nor are we disposed to admit, what is generally taken for granted, that the acknowledged compositions of Francis are very decidedly inferior to the anonymous letters. The argument from inferiority, at all events, is one which may be urged with at least equal force against every claimant that has ever been mentioned, with the single exception of Burke; and it would be a waste of time to prove that Burke was not Junius. And what conclusion, after all, can be drawn from mere inferiority? Every writer must produce his best work; and the interval between his best work and his second best work may be very wide indeed. Nobody will say that the best letters of Junius are more decidedly superior to the acknowledged works of Francis than three or four of Corneille's tragedies to the rest, than three or four of Ben Jonson's comedies to the rest, than the Pilgrim's Progress to the other works of Bunyan, than Don Quixote to the other works of Cervantes. Nay, it is certain that Junius, whoever he may have been, was a most unequal writer. To go no further than the letters which bear the signature of Junius; the letter to the king, and the letters to Horne Tooke, have little in common, except the asperity; and asperity was an

ingredient seldom wanting either in the writings or in the speeches of Francis.

Indeed one of the strongest reasons for believing that Francis was Junius is the moral resemblance between the two men. It is not difficult, from the letters which, under various signatures, are known to have been written by Junius, and from his dealings with Woodfall and others, to form a tolerably correct notion of his character. He was clearly a man not destitute of real patriotism and magnanimity, a man whose vices were not of a sordid kind. But he must also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent, a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked in old time of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered, "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he who, under a strong self-delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties. It may be added that Junius, though allied with the democratic party by common enmities, was the very opposite of a democratic politician. While attacking individuals with a ferocity which perpetually violated all the laws of literary warfare, he regarded the most defective parts of old institutions with a respect amounting to pedantry, pleaded the cause of Old Sarum with fervour, and contemptuously told the capitalists of Manchester and Leeds that, if they wanted votes, they might buy land and become freeholders of Lancashire and Yorkshire. All this, we believe, might stand, with scarcely any change, for a character of Philip Francis.

It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country which had been so powerfully stirred by

his eloquence. Every thing had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater part of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to Junius. His opinions on domestic affairs separated him from the ministry; his opinions on colonial affairs from the opposition. Under such circumstances, he had thrown down his pen in misanthropical despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the nineteenth of January, 1773. In that letter, he declared that he must be an idiot to write again; that he had meant well by the cause and the public; that both were given up; that there were not ten men who would act steadily together on any question. "But it is all alike," he added, "vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know of; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity." These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time, Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal.

With the three new Councillors came out the judges of the Supreme Court. The chief justice was Sir Elijah Impey. He was an old acquaintance of Hastings; and it is probable that the Governor-General, if he had searched through all the inns of court, could not have found an equally serviceable tool. But the members of Council were by no means in an obsequious mood. Hastings greatly disliked the new form of government, and had no very high opinion of his coadjutors. They had heard of this, and were disposed to be suspicious and punctilious. When men are in such a frame of mind, any trifle is sufficient to give occasion for dispute. The members of Council expected a salute of twenty-one guns

from the batteries of Fort William. Hastings allowed them only seventeen. They landed in ill-humour. The first civilities were exchanged with cold reserve. On the morrow commenced that long quarrel which, after distracting British India, was renewed in England, and in which all the most eminent statesmen and orators of the age took active part on one or the other side.

Hastings was supported by Barwell. They had not always been friends. But the arrival of the new members of Council from England naturally had the effect of uniting the old servants of the Company. Clavering, Monson, and Francis formed the majority. They instantly wrested the government out of the hands of Hastings; condemned, certainly not without justice, his late dealings with the Nabob Vizier; recalled the English agent from Oude, and sent thither a creature of their own; ordered the brigade which had conquered the unhappy Rohillas to return to the Company's territories; and instituted a severe inquiry into the conduct of the war. Next, in spite of the Governor-General's remonstrances, they proceeded to exercise, in the most indiscreet manner, their new authority over the subordinate presidencies; threw all the affairs of Bombay into confusion; and interfered, with an incredible union of rashness and feebleness, in the intestine disputes of the Mahratta government. At the same time, they fell on the internal administration of Bengal, and attacked the whole fiscal and judicial system, a system which was undoubtedly defective, but which it was very improbable that gentlemen fresh from England would be competent to amend. The effect of their reforms was that all protection to life and property was withdrawn, and that gangs of robbers plundered and slaughtered with impunity in the very suburbs of Calcutta. Hastings continued to live in the Govern-

ment-house, and to draw the salary of Governor-General. He continued even to take the lead at the council-board in the transaction of ordinary business; for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided, both surely and speedily, many questions which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling. But the higher powers of government and the most valuable patronage had been taken from him.

The natives soon found this out. They considered him as a fallen man; and they acted after their kind. Some of our readers may have seen, in India, a cloud of crows pecking a sick vulture to death, no bad type of what happens in that country, as often as fortune deserts one who has been great and dreaded. In an instant, all the sycophants who had lately been ready to lie for him, to forge for him, to pander for him, to poison for him, hasten to purchase the favour of his victorious enemies by accusing him. An Indian government has only to let it be understood that it wishes a particular man to be ruined; and, in twenty-four hours, it will be furnished with grave charges, supported by depositions so full and circumstantial that any person unaccustomed to Asiatic mendacity would regard them as decisive. It is well if the signature of the destined victim is not counterfeited at the foot of some illegal compact, and if some treasonable paper is not slipped into a hiding-place in his house. Hastings was now regarded as helpless. The power to make or mar the fortune of every man in Bengal had passed, as it seemed, into the hands of the new Councillors. Immediately charges against the Governor-General began to pour in. They were eagerly welcomed by the majority, who, to do them justice, were men of too much honour knowingly to countenance false accusations, but who were not sufficiently acquainted with the East to be aware

that, in that part of the world, a very little encouragement from power will call forth, in a week, more Oateses, and Bedloes, and Dangerfields, than Westminster Hall sees in a century.

It would have been strange indeed if, at such a juncture, Nuncomar had remained quiet. That bad man was stimulated at once by malignity, by avarice, and by ambition. Now was the time to be avenged on his old enemy, to wreak a grudge of seventeen years, to establish himself in the favour of the majority of the Council, to become the greatest native in Bengal. From the time of the arrival of the new Councillors, he had paid the most marked court to them, and had in consequence been excluded, with all indignity, from the Government-house. He now put into the hands of Francis, with great ceremony, a paper containing several charges of the most serious description. By this document Hastings was accused of putting offices up to sale, and of receiving bribes for suffering offenders to escape. In particular, it was alleged that Mahommed Reza Khan had been dismissed with impunity, in consideration of a great sum paid to the Governor-General.

Francis read the paper in Council. A violent altercation followed. Hastings complained in bitter terms of the way in which he was treated, spoke with contempt of Nuncomar and of Nuncomar's accusation, and denied the right of the Council to sit in judgment on the Governor. At the next meeting of the Board, another communication from Nuncomar was produced. He requested that he might be permitted to attend the Council, and that he might be heard in support of his assertions. Another tempestuous debate took place. The Governor-General maintained that the council-room was not a proper place for such an investigation; that from persons who were heated by daily conflict with him he could not

expect the fairness of judges; and that he could not, without betraying the dignity of his post, submit to be confronted with such a man as Nuncomar. The majority, however, resolved to go into the charges. Hastings rose, declared the sitting at an end, and left the room, followed by Barwell. The other members kept their seats, voted themselves a council, put Clavering in the chair, and ordered Nuncomar to be called in. Nuncomar not only adhered to the original charges, but, after the fashion of the East, produced a large supplement. He stated that Hastings had received a great sum for appointing Rajah Goordas treasurer of the Nabob's household, and for committing the care of his Highness's person to the Munny Begum. He put in a letter purporting to bear the seal of the Munny Begum, for the purpose of establishing the truth of his story. The seal, whether forged, as Hastings affirmed, or genuine, as we are rather inclined to believe, proved nothing. Nuncomar, as every body knows who knows India, had only to tell the Munny Begum that such a letter would give pleasure to the majority of the Council, in order to procure her attestation. The majority, however, voted that the charge was made out; that Hastings had corruptly received between thirty and forty thousand pounds; and that he ought to be compelled to refund.

The general feeling among the English in Bengal was strongly in favour of the Governor-General. In talents for business, in knowledge of the country, in general courtesy of demeanour, he was decidedly superior to his persecutors. The servants of the Company were naturally disposed to side with the most distinguished member of their own body against a clerk from the war-office, who, profoundly ignorant of the native languages and of the native character, took on himself to regulate every department of the

administration. Hastings, however, in spite of the general sympathy of his countrymen, was in a most painful situation. There was still an appeal to higher authority in England. If that authority took part with his enemies, nothing was left to him but to throw up his office. He accordingly placed his resignation in the hands of his agent in London, Colonel Macleane. But Macleane was instructed not to produce the resignation, unless it should be fully ascertained that the feeling at the India House was adverse to the Governor-General.

The triumph of Nuncomar seemed to be complete. He held a daily levee, to which his countrymen resorted in crowds, and to which, on one occasion, the majority of the Council condescended to repair. His house was an office for the purpose of receiving charges against the Governor-General. It was said that, partly by threats, and partly by wheedling, the villanous Brahmin had induced many of the wealthiest men of the province to send in complaints. But he was playing a perilous game. It was not safe to drive to despair a man of such resources and of such determination as Hastings. Nuncomar, with all his acuteness, did not understand the nature of the institutions under which he lived. He saw that he had with him the majority of the body which made treaties, gave places, raised taxes. The separation between political and judicial functions was a thing of which he had no conception. It had probably never occurred to him that there was in Bengal an authority perfectly independent of the Council, an authority which could protect one whom the Council wished to destroy, and send to the gibbet one whom the Council wished to protect. Yet such was the fact. The Supreme Court was, within the sphere of its own duties, altogether independent of the Government. Hastings, with his usual sagacity, had

seen how much advantage he might derive from possessing himself of this stronghold; and he had acted accordingly. The Judges, especially the Chief Justice, were hostile to the majority of the Council. The time had now come for putting this formidable machinery into action.

On a sudden, Calcutta was astounded by the news that Nuncomar had been taken up on a charge of felony, committed, and thrown into the common gaol. The crime imputed to him was that six years before he had forged a bond. The ostensible prosecutor was a native. But it was then, and still is, the opinion of every body, idiots and biographers excepted, that Hastings was the real mover in the business.

The rage of the majority rose to the highest point. They protested against the proceedings of the Supreme Court, and sent several urgent messages to the Judges, demanding that Nuncomar should be admitted to bail. The Judges returned haughty and resolute answers. All that the Council could do was to heap honours and emoluments on the family of Nuncomar; and this they did. In the meantime the assizes commenced; a true bill was found; and Nuncomar was brought before Sir Elijah Impey and a jury composed of Englishmen. A great quantity of contradictory swearing, and the necessity of having every word of the evidence interpreted, protracted the trial to a most unusual length. At last a verdict of guilty was returned, and the Chief Justice pronounced sentence of death on the prisoner.

That Impey ought to have respited Nuncomar we hold to be perfectly clear. Whether the whole proceeding was not illegal, is a question. But it is certain that, whatever may have been, according to technical rules of construction, the effect of the statute under which the trial took place, it was most

unjust to hang a Hindoo for forgery. The law which made forgery capital in England was passed without the smallest reference to the state of society in India. It was unknown to the natives of India. It had never been put in execution among them, certainly not for want of delinquents. It was in the highest degree shocking to all their notions. They were not accustomed to the distinction which many circumstances, peculiar to our own state of society, have led us to make between forgery and other kinds of cheating. The counterfeiting of a seal was, in their estimation, a common act of swindling; nor had it ever crossed their minds that it was to be punished as severely as gang-robbery or assassination. A just judge would, beyond all doubt, have reserved the case for the consideration of the sovereign. But Impey would not hear of mercy or delay.

The excitement among all classes was great. Francis and Francis's few English adherents described the Governor-General and the Chief Justice as the worst of murderers. Clavering, it was said, swore that, even at the foot of the gallows, Nuncomar should be rescued. The bulk of the European society, though strongly attached to the Governor-General, could not but feel compassion for a man who, with all his crimes, had so long filled so large a space in their sight, who had been great and powerful before the British empire in India began to exist, and to whom, in the old times, governors and members of council, then mere commercial factors, had paid court for protection. The feeling of the Hindoos was infinitely stronger. They were, indeed, not a people to strike one blow for their countryman. But his sentence filled them with sorrow and dismay. Tried even by their low standard of morality, he was a bad man. But, bad as he was, he was the head of their race and religion, a Brahmin of the Brahmins. He

had inherited the purest and highest caste. He had practised with the greatest punctuality all those ceremonies to which the superstitious Bengalees ascribe far more importance than to the correct discharge of the social duties. They felt, therefore, as a devout Catholic in the dark ages would have felt, at seeing a prelate of the highest dignity sent to the gallows by a secular tribunal. According to their old national laws, a Brahmin could not be put to death for any crime whatever. And the crime for which Nuncomar was about to die was regarded by them in much the same light in which the selling of an unsound horse, for a sound price, is regarded by a Yorkshire jockey.

The Mussulmans alone appear to have seen with exultation the fate of the powerful Hindoo, who had attempted to rise by means of the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan. The Mahommedan historian of those times takes delight in aggravating the charge. He assures us that in Nuncomar's house a casket was found containing counterfeits of the seals of all the richest men of the province. We have never fallen in with any other authority for this story, which in itself is by no means improbable.

The day drew near; and Nuncomar prepared himself to die with that quiet fortitude with which the Bengalee, so effeminately timid in personal conflict, often encounters calamities for which there is no remedy. The sheriff, with the humanity which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman, visited the prisoner on the eve of the execution, and assured him that no indulgence, consistent with the law, should be refused to him. Nuncomar expressed his gratitude with great politeness and unaltered composure. Not a muscle of his face moved. Not a sigh broke from him. He put his finger to his forehead, and calmly said that fate would have its

way, and that there was no resisting the pleasure of God. He sent his compliments to Francis, Clavering, and Monson, and charged them to protect Rajah Goordas, who was about to become the head of the Brahmins of Bengal. The sheriff withdrew, greatly agitated by what had passed, and Nuncomar sat composedly down to write notes and examine accounts.

The next morning, before the sun was in his power, an immense concourse assembled round the place where the gallows had been set up. Grief and horror were on every face; yet to the last the multitude could hardly believe that the English really purposed to take the life of the great Brahmin. At length the mournful procession came through the crowd. Nuncomar sat up in his palanquin, and looked round him with unaltered serenity. He had just parted from those who were most nearly connected with him. Their cries and contortions had appalled the European ministers of justice, but had not produced the smallest effect on the iron stoicism of the prisoner. The only anxiety which he expressed was that men of his own priestly caste might be in attendance to take charge of his corpse. He again desired to be remembered to his friends in the Council, mounted the scaffold with firmness, and gave the signal to the executioner. The moment that the drop fell, a howl of sorrow and despair rose from the innumerable spectators. Hundreds turned away their faces from the polluting sight, fled with loud wailings towards the Hoogley, and plunged into its holy waters, as if to purify themselves from the guilt of having looked on such a crime. These feelings were not confined to Calcutta. The whole province was greatly excited; and the population of Dacca, in particular, gave strong signs of grief and dismay.

Of Impey's conduct it is impossible to speak too

severely. We have already said that, in our opinion, he acted unjustly in refusing to respite Nuncomar. No rational man can doubt that he took this course in order to gratify the Governor-General. If we had ever had any doubts on that point, they would have been dispelled by a letter which Mr. Gleig has published. Hastings, three or four years later, described Impey as the man "to whose support he was at one time indebted for the safety of his fortune, honour, and reputation." These strong words can refer only to the case of Nuncomar; and they must mean that Impey hanged Nuncomar in order to support Hastings. It is, therefore, our deliberate opinion that Impey, sitting as a judge, put a man unjustly to death in order to serve a political purpose.

But we look on the conduct of Hastings in a somewhat different light. He was struggling for fortune, honour, liberty, all that makes life valuable. He was beset by rancorous and unprincipled enemies. From his colleagues he could expect no justice. He cannot be blamed for wishing to crush his accusers. He was indeed bound to use only legitimate means for that end. But it was not strange that he should have thought any means legitimate which were pronounced legitimate by the sages of the law, by men whose peculiar duty it was to deal justly between adversaries, and whose education might be supposed to have peculiarly qualified them for the discharge of that duty. Nobody demands from a party the unbending equity of a judge. The reason that judges are appointed is, that even a good man cannot be trusted to decide a cause in which he is himself concerned. Not a day passes on which an honest prosecutor does not ask for what none but a dishonest tribunal would grant. It is too much to expect that any man, when his dearest interests are at stake, and his strongest passions excited, will, as against himself,

be more just than the sworn dispensers of justice. To take an analogous case from the history of our own island: suppose that Lord Stafford, when in the Tower on suspicion of being concerned in the Popish plot, had been apprised that Titus Oates had done something which might, by a questionable construction, be brought under the head of felony. Should we severely blame Lord Stafford, in the supposed case, for causing a prosecution to be instituted, for furnishing funds, for using all his influence to intercept the mercy of the Crown? We think not. If a judge, indeed, from favour to the Catholic lords, were to strain the law in order to hang Oates, such a judge would richly deserve impeachment. But it does not appear to us that the Catholic lord, by bringing the case before the judge for decision, would materially overstep the limits of a just self-defence.

While, therefore, we have not the least doubt that this memorable execution is to be attributed to Hastings, we doubt whether it can with justice be reckoned among his crimes. That his conduct was dictated by a profound policy is evident. He was in a minority in Council. It was possible that he might long be in a minority. He knew the native character well. He knew in what abundance accusations are certain to flow in against the most innocent inhabitant of India who is under the frown of power. There was not in the whole black population of Bengal a place-holder, a place-hunter, a government tenant, who did not think that he might better himself by sending up a deposition against the Governor-General. Under these circumstances, the persecuted statesman resolved to teach the whole crew of accusers and witnesses that, though in a minority at the council board, he was still to be feared. The lesson which he gave them was indeed

a lesson not to be forgotten. The head of the combination which had been formed against him, the richest, the most powerful, the most artful of the Hindoos, distinguished by the favour of those who then held the government, fenced round by the superstitious reverence of millions, was hanged in broad day before many thousands of people. Every thing that could make the warning impressive, dignity in the sufferer, solemnity in the proceeding, was found in this case. The helpless rage and vain struggles of the Council made the triumph more signal. From that moment the conviction of every native was that it was safer to take the part of Hastings in a minority than that of Francis in a majority, and that he who was so venturous as to join in running down the Governor-General might chance, in the phrase of the Eastern poet, to find a tiger, while beating the jungle for a deer. The voices of a thousand informers were silenced in an instant. From that time, whatever difficulties Hastings might have to encounter, he was never molested by accusations from natives of India.

It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the letters of Hastings to Dr. Johnson bears date a very few hours after the death of Nuncomar. While the whole settlement was in commotion, while a mighty and ancient priesthood were weeping over the remains of their chief, the conqueror in that deadly grapple sat down, with characteristic self-possession, to write about the Tour to the Hebrides, Jones's Persian Grammar, and the history, traditions, arts, and natural productions of India.

In the meantime, intelligence of the Rohilla war, and of the first disputes between Hastings and his colleagues, had reached London. The Directors took part with the majority, and sent out a letter filled with severe reflections on the conduct of

Hastings. They condemned, in strong but just terms, the iniquity of undertaking offensive wars merely for the sake of pecuniary advantages. But they utterly forgot that, if Hastings had by illicit means obtained pecuniary advantages, he had done so, not for his own benefit, but in order to meet their demands. To enjoin honesty, and to insist on having what could not be honestly got, was then the constant practice of the Company. As Lady Macbeth says of her husband, they "would not play false, and yet would wrongly win."

The Regulating Act, by which Hastings had been appointed Governor-General for five years, empowered the Crown to remove him on an address from the Company. Lord North was desirous to procure such an address. The three members of Council who had been sent out from England were men of his own choice. General Clavering, in particular, was supported by a large parliamentary connexion, such as no cabinet could be inclined to disoblige. The wish of the Minister was to displace Hastings, and to put Clavering at the head of the government. In the Court of Directors parties were very nearly balanced. Eleven voted against Hastings; ten for him. The Court of Proprietors was then convened. The great sale-room presented a singular appearance. Letters had been sent by the Secretary of the Treasury, exhorting all the supporters of government who held India stock to be in attendance. Lord Sandwich marshalled the friends of the administration with his usual dexterity and alertness. Fifty peers and privy councillors, seldom seen so far eastward, were counted in the crowd. The debate lasted till midnight. The opponents of Hastings had a small superiority on the division; but a ballot was demanded; and the result was that the Governor-General triumphed by a majority of above a hundred

votes over the combined efforts of the Directors and the Cabinet. The ministers were greatly exasperated by this defeat. Even Lord North lost his temper, no ordinary occurrence with him, and threatened to convoke parliament before Christmas, and to bring in a bill for depriving the Company of all political power, and for restricting it to its old business of trading in silks and teas.

Colonel Macleane, who through all this conflict had zealously supported the cause of Hastings, now thought that his employer was in imminent danger of being turned out, branded with parliamentary censure, perhaps prosecuted. The opinion of the crown lawyers had already been taken respecting some parts of the Governor-General's conduct. It seemed to be high time to think of securing an honourable retreat. Under these circumstances, Macleane thought himself justified in producing the resignation with which he had been entrusted. The instrument was not in very accurate form; but the Directors were too eager to be scrupulous. They accepted the resignation, fixed on Mr. Wheler, one of their own body, to succeed Hastings, and sent out orders that General Clavering, as senior member of Council, should exercise the functions of Governor-General till Mr. Wheler should arrive.

But, while these things were passing in England, a great change had taken place in Bengal. Monson was no more. Only four members of the government were left. Clavering and Francis were on one side, Barwell and the Governor-General on the other; and the Governor-General had the casting vote. Hastings, who had been during two years destitute of all power and patronage, became at once absolute. He instantly proceeded to retaliate on his adversaries. Their measures were reversed: their creatures were displaced. A new valuation of the lands of Bengal,

for the purposes of taxation, was ordered; and it was provided that the whole inquiry should be conducted by the Governor-General, and that all the letters relating to it should run in his name. He began, at the same time, to revolve vast plans of conquest and dominion, plans which he lived to see realised, though not by himself. His project was to form subsidiary alliances with the native princes, particularly with those of Oude and Berar, and thus to make Britain the paramount power in India. While he was meditating these great designs, arrived the intelligence that he had ceased to be Governor-General, that his resignation had been accepted, that Wheler was coming out immediately, and that, till Wheler arrived, the chair was to be filled by Clavering.

Had Hastings still been in a minority, he would probably have retired without a struggle; but he was now the real master of British India, and he was not disposed to quit his high place. He asserted that he had never given any instructions which could warrant the steps taken at home. What his instructions had been, he owned he had forgotten. If he had kept a copy of them he had mislaid it. But he was certain that he had repeatedly declared to the Directors that he would not resign. He could not see how the court, possessed of that declaration from himself, could receive his resignation from the doubtful hands of an agent. If the resignation were invalid, all the proceedings which were founded on that resignation were null, and Hastings was still Governor-General.

He afterwards affirmed that, though his agents had not acted in conformity with his instructions, he would nevertheless have held himself bound by their acts, if Clavering had not attempted to seize the supreme power by violence. Whether this assertion

were or were not true, it cannot be doubted that the imprudence of Clavering gave Hastings an advantage. The General sent for the keys of the fort and of the treasury, took possession of the records, and held a council at which Francis attended. Hastings took the chair in another apartment, and Barwell sat with him. Each of the two parties had a plausible show of right. There was no authority entitled to their obedience within fifteen thousand miles. It seemed that there remained no way of settling the dispute except an appeal to arms; and from such an appeal Hastings, confident of his influence over his countrymen in India, was not inclined to shrink. He directed the officers of the garrison of Fort William and of all the neighbouring stations to obey no orders but his. At the same time, with admirable judgment, he offered to submit the case to the Supreme Court, and to abide by its decision. By making this proposition he risked nothing; yet it was a proposition which his opponents could hardly reject. Nobody could be treated as a criminal for obeying what the judges should solemnly pronounce to be the lawful government. The boldest man would shrink from taking arms in defence of what the judges should pronounce to be usurpation. Clavering and Francis, after some delay, unwillingly consented to abide by the award of the court. The court pronounced that the resignation was invalid, and that therefore Hastings was still Governor-General under the Regulating Act; and the defeated members of the Council, finding that the sense of the whole settlement was against them, acquiesced in the decision.

About this time arrived the news that, after a suit which had lasted several years, the Franconian courts had decreed a divorce between Imhoff and his wife. The Baron left Calcutta, carrying with him the means

of buying an estate in Saxony. The lady became Mrs. Hastings. The event was celebrated by great festivities; and all the most conspicuous persons at Calcutta, without distinction of parties, were invited to the Government-house. Clavering, as the Mahommedan chronicler tells the story, was sick in mind and body, and excused himself from joining the splendid assembly. But Hastings, whom, as it should seem, success in ambition and in love had put into high good-humour, would take no denial. He went himself to the General's house, and at length brought his vanquished rival in triumph to the gay circle which surrounded the bride. The exertion was too much for a frame broken by mortification as well as by disease. Clavering died a few days later.

Wheler, who came out expecting to be Governor-General, and was forced to content himself with a seat at the Council Board, generally voted with Francis. But the Governor-General, with Barwell's help and his own casting vote, was still the master. Some change took place at this time in the feeling both of the Court of Directors and of the Ministers of the Crown. All designs against Hastings were dropped; and, when his original term of five years expired, he was quietly re-appointed. The truth is, that the fearful dangers to which the public interests in every quarter were now exposed, made both Lord North and the Company unwilling to part with a Governor whose talents, experience, and resolution, enmity itself was compelled to acknowledge.

The crisis was indeed formidable. That great and victorious empire, on the throne of which George the Third had taken his seat eighteen years before, with brighter hopes than had attended the accession of any of the long line of English sovereigns, had, by the most senseless misgovernment, been brought to the verge of ruin. In America millions of English-

men were at war with the country from which their blood, their language, their religion, and their institutions were derived, and to which, but a short time before, they had been as strongly attached as the inhabitants of Norfolk and Leicestershire. The great powers of Europe, humbled to the dust by the vigour and genius which had guided the councils of George the Second, now rejoiced in the prospect of a signal revenge. The time was approaching when our island, while struggling to keep down the United States of America, and pressed with a still nearer danger by the too just discontents of Ireland, was to be assailed by France, Spain, and Holland, and to be threatened by the armed neutrality of the Baltic; when even our maritime supremacy was to be in jeopardy; when hostile fleets were to command the Straits of Calpe and the Mexican Sea; when the British flag was to be scarcely able to protect the British Channel. Great as were the faults of Hastings, it was happy for our country that at that conjuncture, the most terrible through which she has ever passed, he was the ruler of her Indian dominions.

An attack by sea on Bengal was little to be apprehended. The danger was that the European enemies of England might form an alliance with some native power, might furnish that power with troops, arms, and ammunition, and might thus assail our possessions on the side of the land. It was chiefly from the Mahrattas that Hastings anticipated danger. The original seat of that singular people was the wild range of hills which runs along the western coast of India. In the reign of Aurungzebe the inhabitants of those regions, led by the great Sevajee, began to descend on the possessions of their wealthier and less warlike neighbours. The energy, ferocity, and cunning of the Mahrattas, soon made

them the most conspicuous among the new powers which were generated by the corruption of the decaying monarchy. At first they were only robbers. They soon rose to the dignity of conquerors. Half the provinces of the empire were turned into Mahratta principalities. Freebooters, sprung from low castes, and accustomed to menial employments, became mighty Rajahs. The Bonslas, at the head of a band of plunderers, occupied the vast region of Berar. The Guicowar, which is, being interpreted, the Herdsman, founded that dynasty which still reigns in Guzerat. The houses of Scindia and Holkar waxed great in Malwa. One adventurous captain made his nest on the impregnable rock of Gooti. Another became the lord of the thousand villages which are scattered among the green rice-fields of Tanjore.

That was the time, throughout India, of double government. The form and the power were every where separated. The Mussulman nabobs who had become sovereign princes, the Vizier in Oude, and the Nizam at Hyderabad, still called themselves the viceroys of the house of Tamerlane. In the same manner the Mahratta states, though really independent of each other, pretended to be members of one empire. They all acknowledged, by words and ceremonies, the supremacy of the heir of Sevajee, a *roi fainéant* who chewed bang and toyed with dancing girls in a state prison at Sattara, and of his Peshwa or mayor of the palace, a great hereditary magistrate, who kept a court with kingly state at Poonah, and whose authority was obeyed in the spacious provinces of Aurungabad and Bejapoor.

Some months before war was declared in Europe the government of Bengal was alarmed by the news that a French adventurer, who passed for a man of quality, had arrived at Poonah. It was said that he had been received there with great distinction, that

he had delivered to the Peshwa letters and presents from Louis the Sixteenth, and that a treaty, hostile to England, had been concluded between France and the Mahrattas.

Hastings immediately resolved to strike the first blow. The title of the Peshwa was not undisputed. A portion of the Mahratta nation was favourable to a pretender. The Governor-General determined to espouse this pretender's interest, to move an army across the peninsula of India, and to form a close alliance with the chief of the house of Bonsla, who ruled Berar, and who, in power and dignity, was inferior to none of the Mahratta princes.

The army had marched, and the negotiations with Berar were in progress, when a letter from the English consul at Cairo brought the news that war had been proclaimed both in London and Paris. All the measures which the crisis required were adopted by Hastings without a moment's delay. The French factories in Bengal were seized. Orders were sent to Madras that Pondicherry should instantly be occupied. Near Calcutta, works were thrown up which were thought to render the approach of a hostile force impossible. A maritime establishment was formed for the defence of the river. Nine new battalions of sepoys were raised, and a corps of native artillery was formed out of the hardy Lascars of the Bay of Bengal. Having made these arrangements, the Governor-General with calm confidence pronounced his presidency secure from all attack, unless the Mahrattas should march against it in conjunction with the French.

The expedition which Hastings had sent westward was not so speedily or completely successful as most of his undertakings. The commanding officer procrastinated. The authorities at Bombay blundered. But the Governor-General persevered. A new com-

mander repaired the errors of his predecessor. Several brilliant actions spread the military renown of the English through regions where no European flag had ever been seen. It is probable that, if a new and more formidable danger had not compelled Hastings to change his whole policy, his plans respecting the Mahratta empire would have been carried into complete effect.

The authorities in England had wisely sent out to Bengal, as commander of the forces and member of the council, one of the most distinguished soldiers of that time. Sir Eyre Coote had, many years before, been conspicuous among the founders of the British empire in the East. At the council of war which preceded the battle of Plassey, he earnestly recommended, in opposition to the majority, that daring course which, after some hesitation, was adopted, and which was crowned with such splendid success. He subsequently commanded in the south of India against the brave and unfortunate Lally, gained the decisive battle of Wandewash over the French and their native allies, took Pondicherry, and made the English power supreme in the Carnatic. Since those great exploits near twenty years had elapsed. Coote had no longer the bodily activity which he had shown in earlier days; nor was the vigour of his mind altogether unimpaired. He was capricious and fretful, and required much coaxing to keep him in good humour. It must, we fear, be added, that the love of money had grown upon him, and that he thought more about his allowances, and less about his duties, than might have been expected from so eminent a member of so noble a profession. Still he was perhaps the ablest officer that was then to be found in the British army. Among the native soldiers his name was great and his influence unrivalled. Nor is he yet forgotten by them. Now and then a

white-bearded old sepoy may still be found, who loves to talk of Porto Novo and Pollilore. It is but a short time since one of those aged men came to present a memorial to an English officer, who holds one of the highest employments in India. A print of Coote hung in the room. The veteran recognised at once that face and figure which he had not seen for more than half a century, and, forgetting his salam to the living, halted, drew himself up, lifted his hand, and with solemn reverence paid his military obeisance to the dead.

Coote, though he did not, like Barwell, vote constantly with the Governor-General, was by no means inclined to join in systematic opposition, and on most questions concurred with Hastings, who did his best, by assiduous courtship, and by readily granting the most exorbitant allowances, to gratify the strongest passions of the old soldier.

It seemed likely at this time that a general reconciliation would put an end to the quarrels which had, during some years, weakened and disgraced the government of Bengal. The dangers of the empire might well induce men of patriotic feeling—and of patriotic feeling neither Hastings nor Francis was destitute—to forget private enmities, and to co-operate heartily for the general good. Coote had never been concerned in faction. Wheler was thoroughly tired of it. Barwell had made an ample fortune, and, though he had promised that he would not leave Calcutta while his help was needed in Council, was most desirous to return to England, and exerted himself to promote an arrangement which would set him at liberty. A compact was made, by which Francis agreed to desist from opposition, and Hastings engaged that the friends of Francis should be admitted to a fair share of the honours and emoluments of the service. During a few months after this

treaty there was apparent harmony at the council-board.

Harmony, indeed, was never more necessary; for at this moment internal calamities, more formidable than war itself, menaced Bengal. The authors of the Regulating Act of 1773 had established two independent powers, the one judicial, the other political; and, with a carelessness scandalously common in English legislation, had omitted to define the limits of either. The judges took advantage of the indistinctness, and attempted to draw to themselves supreme authority, not only within Calcutta, but through the whole of the great territory subject to the presidency of Fort William. There are few Englishmen who will not admit that the English law, in spite of modern improvements, is neither so cheap nor so speedy as might be wished. Still, it is a system which has grown up among us. In some points, it has been fashioned to suit our feelings; in others, it has gradually fashioned our feelings to suit itself. Even to its worst evils we are accustomed; and therefore, though we may complain of them, they do not strike us with the horror and dismay which would be produced by a new grievance of smaller severity. In India the case is widely different. English law, transplanted to that country, has all the vices from which we suffer here; it has them all in a far higher degree; and it has other vices, compared with which the worst vices from which we suffer are trifles. Dilatory here, it is far more dilatory in a land where the help of an interpreter is needed by every judge and by every advocate. Costly here, it is far more costly in a land into which the legal practitioners must be imported from an immense distance. All English labour in India, from the labour of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, down to that of a groom or a watchmaker, must be paid

for at a higher rate than at home. No man will be banished, and banished to the torrid zone, for nothing. The rule holds good with respect to the legal profession. No English barrister will work, fifteen thousand miles from all his friends, with the thermometer at ninety-six in the shade, for the emoluments which will content him in chambers that overlook the Thames. Accordingly, the fees at Calcutta are about three times as great as the fees of Westminster Hall; and this, though the people of India are, beyond all comparison, poorer than the people of England. Yet the delay and the expense, grievous as they are, form the smallest part of the evil which English law, imported without modifications into India, could not fail to produce. The strongest feelings of our nature, honour, religion, female modesty, rose up against the innovation. Arrest on mesne process was the first step in most civil proceedings; and to a native of rank arrest was not merely a restraint, but a foul personal indignity. Oaths were required in every stage of every suit; and the feeling of a Quaker about an oath is hardly stronger than that of a respectable native. That the apartments of a woman of quality should be entered by strange men, or that her face should be seen by them, are, in the East, intolerable outrages, outrages which are more dreaded than death, and which can be expiated only by the shedding of blood. To these outrages the most distinguished families of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, were now exposed. Imagine what the state of our own country would be, if a jurisprudence were on a sudden introduced among us, which should be to us what our jurisprudence was to our Asiatic subjects. Imagine what the state of our country would be, if it were enacted that any man, by merely swearing that a debt was due to him, should acquire a right to insult the persons of men of the most honourable and sacred

callings and of women of the most shrinking delicacy, to horsewhip a general officer, to put a bishop in the stocks, to treat ladies in the way which called forth the blow of Wat Tyler. Something like this was the effect of the attempt which the Supreme Court made to extend its jurisdiction over the whole of the Company's territory.

A reign of terror began, of terror heightened by mystery: for even that which was endured was less horrible than that which was anticipated. No man knew what was next to be expected from this strange tribunal. It came from beyond the black water, as the people of India, with mysterious horror, call the sea. It consisted of judges not one of whom was familiar with the usages of the millions over whom they claimed boundless authority. Its records were kept in unknown characters; its sentences were pronounced in unknown sounds. It had already collected round itself an army of the worst part of the native population, informers, and false witnesses, and common barrators, and agents of chicane, and, above all, a banditti of bailiffs' followers, compared with whom the retainers of the worst English spunging-houses, in the worst times, might be considered as upright and tender-hearted. Many natives, highly considered among their countrymen, were seized, hurried up to Calcutta, flung into the common gaol, not for any crime even imputed, not for any debt that had been proved, but merely as a precaution till their cause should come to trial. There were instances in which men of the most venerable dignity, persecuted without a cause by extortioners, died of rage and shame in the gripe of the vile alguazils of Impey. The harams of noble Mahommedans, sanctuaries respected in the East, by governments which respected nothing else, were burst open by gangs of bailiffs. The Mussulmans, braver and less accustomed to submission than

the Hindoos, sometimes stood on their defence; and there were instances in which they shed their blood in the doorway, while defending, sword in hand, the sacred apartments of their women. Nay, it seemed as if even the faint-hearted Bengalee, who had crouched at the feet of Surajah Dowlah, who had been mute during the administration of Vansittart, would at length find courage in despair. No Mahratta invasion had ever spread through the province such dismay as this inroad of English lawyers. All the injustice of former oppressors, Asiatic and European, appeared as a blessing when compared with the justice of the Supreme Court.

Every class of the population, English and native, with the exception of the ravenous petti-foggers who fattened on the misery and terror of an immense community, cried out loudly against this fearful oppression. But the judges were immovable. If a bailiff was resisted, they ordered the soldiers to be called out. If a servant of the Company, in conformity with the orders of the government, withstood the miserable catchpoles who, with Impey's writs in their hands, exceeded the insolence and rapacity of gang-robbers, he was flung into prison for a contempt. The lapse of sixty years, the virtue and wisdom of many eminent magistrates who have during that time administered justice in the Supreme Court, have not effaced from the minds of the people of Bengal the recollection of those evil days.

The members of the government were, on this subject, united as one man. Hastings had courted the judges; he had found them useful instruments. But he was not disposed to make them his own masters, or the masters of India. His mind was large; his knowledge of the native character most accurate. He saw that the system pursued by the Supreme Court was degrading to the government

and ruinous to the people; and he resolved to oppose it manfully. The consequence was, that the friendship, if that be the proper word for such a connexion, which had existed between him and Impey, was for a time completely dissolved. The government placed itself firmly between the tyrannical tribunal and the people. The Chief Justice proceeded to the wildest excesses. The Governor-General and all the members of Council were served with writs, calling on them to appear before the King's justices, and to answer for their public acts. This was too much. Hastings, with just scorn, refused to obey the call, set at liberty the persons wrongfully detained by the Court, and took measures for resisting the outrageous proceedings of the sheriffs' officers, if necessary, by the sword. But he had in view another device which might prevent the necessity of an appeal to arms. He was seldom at a loss for an expedient; and he knew Impey well. The expedient, in this case, was a very simple one, neither more nor less than a bribe. Impey was, by act of parliament, a judge, independent of the government of Bengal, and entitled to a salary of eight thousand a year. Hastings proposed to make him also a judge in the Company's service, removable at the pleasure of the government of Bengal; and to give him, in that capacity, about eight thousand a year more. It was understood that, in consideration of this new salary, Impey would desist from urging the high pretensions of his court. If he did urge these pretensions, the government could, at a moment's notice, eject him from the new place which had been created for him. The bargain was struck; Bengal was saved; an appeal to force was averted; and the Chief Justice was rich, quiet, and infamous.

Of Impey's conduct it is unnecessary to speak. It was of a piece with almost every part of his

conduct that comes under the notice of history. No other such judge has dishonoured the English ermine, since Jefferies drank himself to death in the Tower. But we cannot agree with those who have blamed Hastings for this transaction. The case stood thus. The negligent manner in which the Regulating Act had been framed put it in the power of the Chief Justice to throw a great country into the most dreadful confusion. He was determined to use his power to the utmost, unless he was paid to be still; and Hastings consented to pay him. The necessity was to be deplored. It is also to be deplored that pirates should be able to exact ransom by threatening to make their captives walk the plank. But to ransom a captive from pirates has always been held a humane and Christian act; and it would be absurd to charge the payer of the ransom with corrupting the virtue of the corsair. This, we seriously think, is a not unfair illustration of the relative position of Impey, Hastings, and the people of India. Whether it was right in Impey to demand or to accept a price for powers which, if they really belonged to him, he could not abdicate, which, if they did not belong to him, he ought never to have usurped, and which in neither case he could honestly sell, is one question. It is quite another question, whether Hastings was not right to give any sum, however large, to any man, however worthless, rather than either surrender millions of human beings to pillage, or rescue them by civil war.

Francis strongly opposed this arrangement. It may, indeed, be suspected that personal aversion to Impey was as strong a motive with Francis as regard for the welfare of the province. To a mind burning with resentment, it might seem better to leave Bengal to the oppressors than to redeem it by enriching them. It is not improbable, on the other hand, that

Hastings may have been the more willing to resort to an expedient agreeable to the Chief Justice, because that high functionary had already been so serviceable, and might, when existing dissensions were composed, be serviceable again.

But it was not on this point alone that Francis was now opposed to Hastings. The peace between them proved to be only a short and hollow truce, during which their mutual aversion was constantly becoming stronger. At length an explosion took place. Hastings publicly charged Francis with having deceived him, and with having induced Barwell to quit the service by insincere promises. Then came a dispute, such as frequently arises even between honourable men, when they may make important agreements by mere verbal communication. An impartial historian will probably be of opinion that they had misunderstood each other; but their minds were so much embittered that they imputed to each other nothing less than deliberate villany. "I do not," said Hastings, in a minute recorded on the Consultations of the Government, "I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour." After the Council had risen, Francis put a challenge into the Governor-General's hand. It was instantly accepted. They met, and fired. Francis was shot through the body. He was carried to a neighbouring house, where it appeared that the wound, though severe, was not mortal. Hastings inquired repeatedly after his enemy's health, and proposed to call on him; but Francis coldly declined the visit. He had a proper sense, he said, of the Governor-General's politeness, but could not consent to any private interview. They could meet only at the council-board.

In a very short time it was made signally manifest to how great a danger the Governor-General had, on this occasion, exposed his country. A crisis arrived with which he, and he alone, was competent to deal. It is not too much to say that, if he had been taken from the head of affairs, the years 1780 and 1781 would have been as fatal to our power in Asia as to our power in America.

The Mahrattas had been the chief objects of apprehension to Hastings. The measures which he had adopted for the purpose of breaking their power, had at first been frustrated by the errors of those whom he was compelled to employ; but his perseverance and ability seemed likely to be crowned with success, when a far more formidable danger showed itself in a distant quarter.

About thirty years before this time, a Mahommedan soldier had begun to distinguish himself in the wars of Southern India. His education had been neglected; his extraction was humble. His father had been a petty officer of revenue; his grandfather a wandering dervise. But though thus meanly descended, though ignorant even of the alphabet, the adventurer had no sooner been placed at the head of a body of troops than he approved himself a man born for conquest and command. Among the crowd of chiefs who were struggling for a share of India, none could compare with him in the qualities of the captain and the statesman. He became a general; he became a sovereign. Out of the fragments of old principalities, which had gone to pieces in the general wreck, he formed for himself a great, compact, and vigorous empire. That empire he ruled with the ability, severity, and vigilance of Louis the Eleventh. Licentious in his pleasures, implacable in his revenge, he had yet enlargement of mind enough to perceive how much the prosperity of subjects adds to the

strength of governments. He was an oppressor; but he had at least the merit of protecting his people against all oppression except his own. He was now in extreme old age; but his intellect was as clear, and his spirit as high, as in the prime of manhood. Such was the great Hyder Ali, the founder of the Mahommedan kingdom of Mysore, and the most formidable enemy with whom the English conquerors of India have ever had to contend.

Had Hastings been governor of Madras, Hyder would have been either made a friend, or vigorously encountered as an enemy. Unhappily the English authorities in the south provoked their powerful neighbour's hostility, without being prepared to repel it. On a sudden, an army of ninety thousand men, far superior in discipline and efficiency to any other native force that could be found in India, came pouring through those wild passes which, worn by mountain torrents, and dark with jungle, lead down from the table-land of Mysore to the plains of the Carnatic. This great army was accompanied by a hundred pieces of cannon; and its movements were guided by many French officers, trained in the best military schools of Europe.

Hyder was every where triumphant. The sepoys in many British garrisons flung down their arms. Some forts were surrendered by treachery, and some by despair. In a few days the whole open country north of the Coleroon had submitted. The English inhabitants of Madras could already see by night, from the top of Mount St. Thomas, the eastern sky reddened by a vast semicircle of blazing villages. The white villas, to which our countrymen retire after the daily labours of government and of trade, when the cool evening breeze springs up from the bay, were now left without inhabitants; for bands of the fierce horsemen of Mysore had already been seen

prowling among the tulip-trees, and near the gay verandas. Even the town was not thought secure, and the British merchants and public functionaries made haste to crowd themselves behind the cannon of Fort St. George.

There were the means indeed of assembling an army which might have defended the presidency, and even driven the invader back to his mountains. Sir Hector Munro was at the head of one considerable force; Baillie was advancing with another. United, they might have presented a formidable front even to such an enemy as Hyder. But the English commanders, neglecting those fundamental rules of the military art of which the propriety is obvious even to men who have never received a military education, deferred their junction, and were separately attacked. Baillie's detachment was destroyed. Munro was forced to abandon his baggage, to fling his guns into the tanks, and to save himself by a retreat which might be called a flight. In three weeks from the commencement of the war, the British empire in Southern India had been brought to the verge of ruin. Only a few fortified places remained to us. The glory of our arms had departed. It was known that a great French expedition might soon be expected on the coast of Coromandel. England, beset by enemies on every side, was in no condition to protect such remote dependencies.

Then it was that the fertile genius and serene courage of Hastings achieved their most signal triumph. A swift ship, flying before the south-west monsoon, brought the evil tidings in a few days to Calcutta. In twenty-four hours the Governor-General had framed a complete plan of policy adapted to the altered state of affairs. The struggle with Hyder was a struggle for life and death. All minor objects must be sacrificed to the preservation of the Carnatic. The

disputes with the Mahrattas must be accommodated. A large military force and a supply of money must be instantly sent to Madras. But even these measures would be insufficient, unless the war, hitherto so grossly mismanaged, were placed under the direction of a vigorous mind. It was no time for trifling. Hastings determined to resort to an extreme exercise of power, to suspend the incapable governor of Fort St. George, to send Sir Eyre Coote to oppose Hyder, and to entrust that distinguished general with the whole administration of the war.

In spite of the sullen opposition of Francis, who had now recovered from his wound, and had returned to the Council, the Governor-General's wise and firm policy was approved by the majority of the board. The reinforcements were sent off with great expedition, and reached Madras before the French armament arrived in the Indian seas. Coote, broken by age and disease, was no longer the Coote of Wandewash; but he was still a resolute and skilful commander. The progress of Hyder was arrested; and in a few months the great victory of Porto Novo retrieved the honour of the English arms.

In the meantime Francis had returned to England, and Hastings was now left perfectly unfettered. Wheler had gradually been relaxing in his opposition, and, after the departure of his vehement and implacable colleague, co-operated heartily with the Governor-General, whose influence over the British in India, always great, had, by the vigour and success of his recent measures, been considerably increased.

But, though the difficulties arising from factions within the Council were at an end, another class of difficulties had become more pressing than ever. The financial embarrassment was extreme. Hastings had to find the means, not only of carrying on the government of Bengal, but of maintaining a most costly war

against both Indian and European enemies in the Carnatic, and of making remittances to England. A few years before this time he had obtained relief by plundering the Mogul and enslaving the Rohillas; nor were the resources of his fruitful mind by any means exhausted.

His first design was on Benares, a city which in wealth, population, dignity, and sanctity, was among the foremost of Asia. It was commonly believed that half a million of human beings was crowded into that labyrinth of lofty alleys, rich with shrines, and minarets, and balconies, and carved oriels, to which the sacred apes clung by hundreds. The traveller could scarcely make his way through the press of holy mendicants and not less holy bulls. The broad and stately flights of steps which descended from these swarming haunts to the bathing-places along the Ganges were worn every day by the footsteps of an innumerable multitude of worshippers. The schools and temples drew crowds of pious Hindoos from every province where the Brahminical faith was known. Hundreds of devotees came thither every month to die: for it was believed that a peculiarly happy fate awaited the man who should pass from the sacred city into the sacred river. Nor was superstition the only motive which allured strangers to that great metropolis. Commerce had as many pilgrims as religion. All along the shores of the venerable stream lay great fleets of vessels laden with rich merchandise. From the looms of Benares went forth the most delicate silks that adorned the balls of St. James's and of Versailles; and, in the bazars, the muslins of Bengal and the sabres of Oude were mingled with the jewels of Golconda and the shawls of Cashmere. This rich capital, and the surrounding tract, had long been under the immediate rule of a Hindoo Prince, who rendered homage to

the Mogul emperors. During the great anarchy of India, the lords of Benares became independent of the Court of Delhi, but were compelled to submit to the authority of the Nabob of Oude. Oppressed by this formidable neighbour, they invoked the protection of the English. The English protection was given; and at length the Nabob Vizier, by a solemn treaty, ceded all his rights over Benares to the Company. From that time the Rajah was the vassal of the government of Bengal, acknowledged its supremacy, and engaged to send an annual tribute to Fort William. This tribute Cheyte Sing, the reigning prince, had paid with strict punctuality.

About the precise nature of the legal relation between the Company and the Rajah of Benares, there has been much warm and acute controversy. On the one side, it has been maintained that Cheyte Sing was merely a great subject on whom the superior power had a right to call for aid in the necessities of the empire. On the other side, it has been contended that he was an independent prince, that the only claim which the Company had upon him was for a fixed tribute, and that while the fixed tribute was regularly paid, as it assuredly was, the English had no more right to exact any further contribution from him than to demand subsidies from Holland or Denmark. Nothing is easier than to find precedents and analogies in favour of either view.

Our own impression is that neither view is correct. It was too much the habit of English politicians to take it for granted that there was in India a known and definite constitution by which questions of this kind were to be decided. The truth is that, during the interval which elapsed between the fall of the house of Tamerlane and the establishment of the British ascendency, there was no such constitution. The old order of things had passed away; the new

order of things was not yet formed. All was transition, confusion, obscurity. Every body kept his head as he best might, and scrambled for whatever he could get. There have been similar seasons in Europe. The time of the dissolution of the Carlovingian empire is an instance. Who would think of seriously discussing the question, what extent of pecuniary aid and of obedience Hugh Capet had a constitutional right to demand from the Duke of Britanny or the Duke of Normandy? The words "constitutional right" had, in that state of society, no meaning. If Hugh Capet laid hands on all the possessions of the Duke of Normandy, this might be unjust and immoral; but it would not be illegal, in the sense in which the ordinances of Charles the Tenth were illegal. If, on the other hand, the Duke of Normandy made war on Hugh Capet, this might be unjust and immoral; but it would not be illegal, in the sense in which the expedition of Prince Louis Buonaparte was illegal.

Very similar to this was the state of India sixty years ago. Of the existing governments not a single one could lay claim to legitimacy, or could plead any other title than recent occupation. There was scarcely a province in which the real sovereignty and the nominal sovereignty were not disjoined. Titles and forms were still retained which implied that the heir of Tamerlane was an absolute ruler, and that the Nabobs of the provinces were his lieutenants. In reality, he was a captive. The Nabobs were in some places independent princes. In other places, as in Bengal and the Carnatic, they had, like their master, become mere phantoms, and the Company was supreme. Among the Mahrattas again the heir of Sevajee still kept the title of Rajah; but he was a prisoner, and his prime minister, the Peshwa, had become the hereditary chief of the state. The Peshwa,

in his turn, was fast sinking into the same degraded situation to which he had reduced the Rajah. It was, we believe, impossible to find, from the Himalayas to Mysore, a single government which was at once a government *de facto* and a government *de jure*, which possessed the physical means of making itself feared by its neighbours and subjects, and which had at the same time the authority derived from law and long prescription.

Hastings clearly discerned, what was hidden from most of his contemporaries, that such a state of things gave immense advantages to a ruler of great talents and few scruples. In every international question that could arise, he had his option between the *de facto* ground and the *de jure* ground; and the probability was that one of those grounds would sustain any claim that it might be convenient for him to make, and enable him to resist any claim made by others. In every controversy, accordingly, he resorted to the plea which suited his immediate purpose, without troubling himself in the least about consistency; and thus he scarcely ever failed to find what, to persons of short memories and scanty information, seemed to be a justification for what he wanted to do. Sometimes the Nabob of Bengal is a shadow, sometimes a monarch. Sometimes the Vizier is a mere deputy, sometimes an independent potentate. If it is expedient for the Company to show some legal title to the revenues of Bengal, the grant under the seal of the Mogul is brought forward as an instrument of the highest authority. When the Mogul asks for the rents which were reserved to him by that very grant, he is told that he is a mere pageant, that the English power rests on a very different foundation from a charter given by him, that he is welcome to play at royalty as long as he likes, but that he

must expect no tribute from the real masters of India.

It is true that it was in the power of others, as well as of Hastings, to practise this legerdemain; but in the controversies of governments, sophistry is of little use unless it be backed by power. There is a principle which Hastings was fond of asserting in the strongest terms, and on which he acted with undeviating steadiness. It is a principle which, we must own, though it may be grossly abused, can hardly be disputed in the present state of public law. It is this, that where an ambiguous question arises between two governments, there is, if they cannot agree, no appeal except to force, and that the opinion of the stronger must prevail. Almost every question was ambiguous in India. The English government was the strongest in India. The consequences are obvious. The English government might do exactly what it chose.

The English government now chose to wring money out of Cheyte Sing. It had formerly been convenient to treat him as a sovereign prince; it was now convenient to treat him as a subject. Dexterity inferior to that of Hastings could easily find, in the general chaos of laws and customs, arguments for either course. Hastings wanted a great supply. It was known that Cheyte Sing had a large revenue, and it was suspected that he had accumulated a treasure. Nor was he a favourite at Calcutta. He had, when the Governor-General was in great difficulties, courted the favour of Francis and Clavering. Hastings who, less, perhaps, from evil passions than from policy, seldom left an injury unpunished, was not sorry that the fate of Cheyte Sing should teach neighbouring princes the same lesson which the fate of Nuncomar had already impressed on the inhabitants of Bengal.

In 1778, on the first breaking out of the war with

France, Cheyte Sing was called upon to pay, in addition to his fixed tribute, an extraordinary contribution of fifty thousand pounds. In 1779, an equal sum was exacted. In 1780, the demand was renewed. Cheyte Sing, in the hope of obtaining some indulgence, secretly offered the Governor-General a bribe of twenty thousand pounds. Hastings took the money, and his enemies have maintained that he took it intending to keep it. He certainly concealed the transaction, for a time, both from the Council in Bengal and from the Directors at home; nor did he ever give any satisfactory reason for the concealment. Public spirit, or the fear of detection, at last, determined him to withstand the temptation. He paid over the bribe to the Company's treasury, and insisted that the Rajah should instantly comply with the demands of the English government. The Rajah, after the fashion of his countrymen, shuffled, solicited, and pleaded poverty. The grasp of Hastings was not to be so eluded. He added to the requisition another ten thousand pounds as a fine for delay, and sent troops to exact the money.

The money was paid. But this was not enough. The late events in the south of India had increased the financial embarrassments of the Company. Hastings was determined to plunder Cheyte Sing, and for that end, to fasten a quarrel on him. Accordingly, the Rajah was now required to keep a body of cavalry for the service of the British government. He objected and evaded. This was exactly what the Governor-General wanted. He had now a pretext for treating the wealthiest of his vassals as a criminal. "I resolved"—these are the words of Hastings himself—"to draw from his guilt the means of relief of the Company's distresses, to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for past delinquency." The plan was simply this, to demand

larger and larger contributions till the Rajah should be driven to remonstrate, then to call his remonstrance a crime, and to punish him by confiscating all his possessions.

Cheyte Sing was in the greatest dismay. He offered two hundred thousand pounds to propitiate the British government. But Hastings replied that nothing less than half a million would be accepted. Nay, he began to think of selling Benares to Oude, as he had formerly sold Allahabad and Rohilcund. The matter was one which could not be well managed at a distance; and Hastings resolved to visit Benares.

Cheyte Sing received his liege lord with every mark of reverence, came near sixty miles, with his guards, to meet and escort the illustrious visitor, and expressed his deep concern at the displeasure of the English. He even took off his turban, and laid it in the lap of Hastings, a gesture which in India marks the most profound submission and devotion. Hastings behaved with cold and repulsive severity. Having arrived at Benares, he sent to the Rajah a paper containing the demands of the government of Bengal. The Rajah, in reply, attempted to clear himself from the accusations brought against him. Hastings, who wanted money and not excuses, was not to be put off by the ordinary artifices of Eastern negotiation. He instantly ordered the Rajah to be arrested and placed under the custody of two companies of sepoys.

In taking these strong measures, Hastings scarcely showed his usual judgment. It is possible that, having had little opportunity of personally observing any part of the population of India, except the Bengalese, he was not fully aware of the difference between their character and that of the tribes which inhabit the upper provinces. He was now in a land far more favourable to the vigour of the human frame than the Delta of the Ganges; in a land fruitful of soldiers,

who have been found worthy to follow English battalions to the charge and into the breach. The Rajah was popular among his subjects. His administration had been mild ; and the prosperity of the district which he governed presented a striking contrast to the depressed state of Bahar under our rule, and a still more striking contrast to the misery of the provinces which were cursed by the tyranny of the Nabob Vizier. The national and religious prejudices with which the English were regarded throughout India were peculiarly intense in the metropolis of the Brahminical superstition. It can therefore scarcely be doubted that the Governor-General before he outraged the dignity of Cheyte Sing by an arrest, ought to have assembled a force capable of bearing down all opposition. This had not been done. The handful of sepoys who attended Hastings would probably have been sufficient to overawe Moorshedabad, or the Black Town of Calcutta. But they were unequal to a conflict with the hardy rabble of Benares. The streets surrounding the palace were filled by an immense multitude, of whom a large proportion, as is usual in Upper India, wore arms. The tumult became a fight, and the fight a massacre. The English officers defended themselves with desperate courage against overwhelming numbers, and fell, as became them, sword in hand. The sepoys were butchered. The gates were forced. The captive prince, neglected by his gaolers during the confusion, discovered an outlet which opened on the precipitous bank of the Ganges, let himself down to the water by a string made of the turbans of his attendants, found a boat, and escaped to the opposite shore.

If Hastings had, by indiscreet violence, brought himself into a difficult and perilous situation, it is only just to acknowledge that he extricated himself with even more than his usual ability and presence of mind.

He had only fifty men with him. The building in which he had taken up his residence was on every side blockaded by the insurgents. But his fortitude remained unshaken. The Rajah from the other side of the river sent apologies and liberal offers. They were not even answered. Some subtle and enterprising men were found who undertook to pass through the throng of enemies, and to convey the intelligence of the late events to the English cantonments. It is the fashion of the natives of India to wear large earrings of gold. When they travel, the rings are laid aside, lest the precious metal should tempt some gang of robbers; and, in place of the ring, a quill or a roll of paper is inserted in the orifice to prevent it from closing. Hastings placed in the ears of his messengers letters rolled up in the smallest compass. Some of these letters were addressed to the commanders of the English troops. One was written to assure his wife of his safety. One was to the envoy whom he had sent to negotiate with the Mahrattas. Instructions for the negotiation were needed; and the Governor-General framed them in that situation of extreme danger, with as much composure as if he had been writing in his palace at Calcutta.

Things, however, were not yet at the worst. An English officer of more spirit than judgment, eager to distinguish himself, made a premature attack on the insurgents beyond the river. His troops were entangled in narrow streets, and assailed by a furious population. He fell, with many of his men; and the survivors were forced to retire.

This event produced the effect which has never failed to follow every check, however slight, sustained in India by the English arms. For hundreds of miles round, the whole country was in commotion. The entire population of the district of Benares took arms. The fields were abandoned by the husbandmen, who

thronged to defend their prince. The infection spread to Oude. The oppressed people of that province rose up against the Nabob Vizier, refused to pay their imposts, and put the revenue officers to flight. Even Bahar was ripe for revolt. The hopes of Cheyte Sing began to rise. Instead of imploring mercy in the humble style of a vassal, he began to talk the language of a conqueror, and threatened, it was said, to sweep the white usurpers out of the land. But the English troops were now assembling fast. The officers, and even the private men, regarded the Governor-General with enthusiastic attachment, and flew to his aid with an alacrity which, as he boasted, had never been shown on any other occasion. Major Popham, a brave and skilful soldier, who had highly distinguished himself in the Mahratta war, and in whom the Governor-General reposed the greatest confidence, took the command. The tumultuary army of the Rajah was put to rout. His fastnesses were stormed. In a few hours, above thirty thousand men left his standard, and returned to their ordinary avocations. The unhappy prince fled from his country for ever. His fair domain was added to the British dominions. One of his relations indeed was appointed rajah; but the Rajah of Benares was henceforth to be, like the Nabob of Bengal, a mere pensioner.

By this revolution, an addition of two hundred thousand pounds a year was made to the revenues of the Company. But the immediate relief was not as great as had been expected. The treasure laid up by Cheyte Sing had been popularly estimated at a million sterling. It turned out to be about a fourth part of that sum; and such, as it was, it was seized by the army, and divided as prize-money.

Disappointed in his expectations from Benares, Hastings was more violent than he would otherwise

have been, in his dealings with Oude. Sujah Dowlah had long been dead. His son and successor, Asaph-ul-Dowlah, was one of the weakest and most vicious even of Eastern princes. His life was divided between torpid repose and the most odious forms of sensuality. In his court there was boundless waste, throughout his dominions wretchedness and disorder. He had been, under the skilful management of the English government, gradually sinking from the rank of an independent prince to that of a vassal of the Company. It was only by the help of a British brigade that he could be secure from the aggressions of neighbours who despised his weakness, and from the vengeance of subjects who detested his tyranny. A brigade was furnished; and he engaged to defray the charge of paying and maintaining it. From that time his independence was at an end. Hastings was not a man to lose the advantage which he had thus gained. The Nabob soon began to complain of the burden which he had undertaken to bear. His revenues, he said, were falling off; his servants were unpaid; he could no longer support the expense of the arrangement which he had sanctioned. Hastings would not listen to these representations. The Vizier, he said, had invited the Government of Bengal to send him troops, and had promised to pay for them. The troops had been sent. How long the troops were to remain in Oude was a matter not settled by the treaty. It remained, therefore, to be settled between the contracting parties. But the contracting parties differed. Who then must decide? The stronger.

Hastings also argued that, if the English force was withdrawn, Oude would certainly become a prey to anarchy, and would probably be overrun by a Mahratta army. That the finances of Oude were embarrassed he admitted. But he contended, not without

reason, that the embarrassment was to be attributed to the incapacity and vices of Asaph-ul-Dowlah himself, and that, if less were spent on the troops, the only effect would be that more would be squandered on worthless favourites.

Hastings had intended, after settling the affairs of Benares, to visit Lucknow, and there to confer with Asaph-ul-Dowlah. But the obsequious courtesy of the Nabob Vizier prevented this visit. With a small train he hastened to meet the Governor-General. An interview took place in the fortress which, from the crest of the precipitous rock of Chunar, looks down on the waters of the Ganges.

At first sight it might appear impossible that the negotiation should come to an amicable close. Hastings wanted an extraordinary supply of money. Asaph-ul-Dowlah wanted to obtain a remission of what he already owed. Such a difference seemed to admit of no compromise. There was, however, one course satisfactory to both sides, one course by which it was possible to relieve the finances both of Oude and of Bengal; and that course was adopted. It was simply this, that the Governor-General and the Nabob Vizier should join to rob a third party; and the third party whom they determined to rob was the parent of one of the robbers.

The mother of the late Nabob, and his wife, who was the mother of the present Nabob, were known as the Begums or Princesses of Oude. They had possessed great influence over Sujah Dowlah, and had, at his death, been left in possession of a splendid dotation. The domains of which they received the rents and administered the government were of wide extent. The treasure hoarded by the late Nabob, a treasure which was popularly estimated at near three millions sterling, was in their hands. They continued to occupy his favourite palace at Fyzabad, the

Beautiful Dwelling; while Asaph-ul-Dowlah held his court in the stately Lucknow, which he had built for himself on the shores of the Goomti, and had adorned with noble mosques and colleges.

Asaph-ul-Dowlah had already extorted considerable sums from his mother. She had at length appealed to the English; and the English had interfered. A solemn compact had been made, by which she consented to give her son some pecuniary assistance, and he in his turn promised never to commit any further invasion of her rights. This compact was formally guaranteed by the government of Bengal. But times had changed; money was wanted; and the power which had given the guarantee was not ashamed to instigate the spoiler to excesses such that even he shrank from them.

It was necessary to find some pretext for a confiscation inconsistent, not merely with plighted faith, not merely with the ordinary rules of humanity and justice, but also with that great law of filial piety which, even in the wildest tribes of savages, even in those more degraded communities which wither under the influence of a corrupt half-civilization, retains a certain authority over the human mind. A pretext was the last thing that Hastings was likely to want. The insurrection at Benares had produced disturbances in Oude. These disturbances it was convenient to impute to the Princesses. Evidence for the imputation there was scarcely any; unless reports wandering from one mouth to another, and gaining something by every transmission, may be called evidence. The accused were furnished with no charge; they were permitted to make no defence; for the Governor-General wisely considered that, if he tried them, he might not be able to find a ground for plundering them. It was agreed between him and the Nabob Vizier that the noble ladies should,

by a sweeping act of confiscation, be stripped of their domains and treasures for the benefit of the Company, and that the sums thus obtained should be accepted by the government of Bengal in satisfaction of its claims on the government of Oude.

While Asaph-ul-Dowlah was at Chunar, he was completely subjugated by the clear and commanding intellect of the English statesman. But when they had separated, the Vizier began to reflect with uneasiness on the engagement into which he had entered. His mother and grandmother protested and implored. His heart, deeply corrupted by absolute power and licentious pleasures, yet not naturally unfeeling, failed him in this crisis. Even the English resident at Lucknow, though hitherto devoted to Hastings, shrank from extreme measures. But the Governor-General was inexorable. He wrote to the resident in terms of the greatest severity, and declared that, if the spoliation which had been agreed upon were not instantly carried into effect, he would himself go to Lucknow, and do that from which feebler minds recoil with dismay. The resident, thus menaced, waited on his Highness and insisted that the treaty of Chunar should be carried into full and immediate effect. Asaph-ul-Dowlah yielded, making at the same time a solemn protestation that he yielded to compulsion. The lands were resumed; but the treasure was not so easily obtained. It was necessary to use violence. A body of the Company's troops marched to Fyzabad, and forced the gates of the palace. The Princesses were confined to their own apartments. But still they refused to submit. Some more stringent mode of coercion was to be found. A mode was found of which, even at this distance of time, we cannot speak without shame and sorrow.

There were at Fyzabad two ancient men, belong-

ing to that unhappy class which a practice, of immemorial antiquity in the East, has excluded from the pleasures of love and from the hope of posterity. It has always been held in Asiatic courts that beings thus estranged from sympathy with their kind are those whom princes may most safely trust. Sujah Dowlah had been of this opinion. He had given his entire confidence to the two eunuchs; and after his death they remained at the head of the household of his widow.

These men were, by the orders of the British government, seized, imprisoned, ironed, starved almost to death, in order to extort money from the Princesses. After they had been two months in confinement, their health gave way. They implored permission to take a little exercise in the garden of their prison. The officer who was in charge of them stated that, if they were allowed this indulgence, there was not the smallest chance of their escaping, and that their irons really added nothing to the security of the custody in which they were kept. He did not understand the plan of his superiors. Their object in these inflictions was not security but torture; and all mitigation was refused. Yet this was not the worst. It was resolved by an English government that these two infirm old men should be delivered to the tormentors. For that purpose they were removed to Lucknow. What horrors their dungeon there witnessed can only be guessed. But there remains on the records of Parliament, this letter, written by a British resident to a British soldier.

"Sir, the Nabob having determined to inflict corporal punishment upon the prisoners under your guard, this is to desire that his officers, when they shall come, may have free access to the prisoners, and be permitted to do with them as they shall see proper."

While these barbarities were perpetrated at Lucknow, the Princesses were still under duresse at Fyzabad. Food was allowed to enter their apartments only in such scanty quantities that their female attendants were in danger of perishing with hunger. Month after month this cruelty continued, till at length, after twelve hundred thousand pounds had been wrung out of the Princesses, Hastings began to think that he had really got to the bottom of their coffers, and that no rigour could extort more. Then at length the wretched men who were detained at Lucknow regained their liberty. When their irons were knocked off, and the doors of their prison opened, their quivering lips, the tears which ran down their cheeks, and the thanksgivings which they poured forth to the common Father of Mussulmans and Christians, melted even the stout hearts of the English warriors who stood by.

But we must not forget to do justice to Sir Elijah Impey's conduct on this occasion. It was not indeed easy for him to intrude himself into a business so entirely alien from all his official duties. But there was something inexpressibly alluring, we must suppose, in the peculiar rankness of the infamy which was then to be got at Lucknow. He hurried thither as fast as relays of palanquin-bearers could carry him. A crowd of people came before him with affidavits against the Begums, ready drawn in their hands. Those affidavits he did not read. Some of them, indeed, he could not read; for they were in the dialects of Northern India, and no interpreter was employed. He administered the oath to the deponents, with all possible expedition, and asked not a single question, not even whether they had perused the statements to which they swore. This work performed, he got again into his palanquin, and posted back to Calcutta, to be in time for the opening of

term. The cause was one which, by his own confession, lay altogether out of his jurisdiction. Under the charter of justice, he had no more right to inquire into crimes committed by Asiatics in Oude than the Lord President of the Court of Session of Scotland to hold an assize at Exeter. He had no right to try the Begums, nor did he pretend to try them. With what object, then, did he undertake so long a journey? Evidently in order that he might give, in an irregular manner, that sanction which in a regular manner he could not give, to the crimes of those who had recently hired him; and in order that a confused mass of testimony which he did not sift, which he did not even read, might acquire an authority not properly belonging to it, from the signature of the highest judicial functionary in India.

The time was approaching, however, when he was to be stripped of that robe which has never, since the Revolution, been disgraced so foully as by him. The state of India had for some time occupied much of the attention of the British Parliament. Towards the close of the American war, two committees of the Commons sat on Eastern affairs. In one Edmund Burke took the lead. The other was under the presidency of the able and versatile Henry Dundas, then Lord Advocate of Scotland. Great as are the changes which, during the last sixty years, have taken place in our Asiatic dominions, the reports which those committees laid on the table of the House will still be found most interesting and instructive.

There was as yet no connection between the Company and either of the great parties in the state. The ministers had no motive to defend Indian abuses. On the contrary, it was for their interest to show, if possible, that the government and patronage of our Oriental empire might, with advantage, be transferred to themselves. The votes therefore, which, in conse-

quence of the reports made by the two committees, were passed by the Commons, breathed the spirit of stern and indignant justice. The severest epithets were applied to several of the measures of Hastings, especially to the Rohilla war; and it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Dundas, that the Company ought to recall a Governor-General who had brought such calamities on the Indian people, and such dishonour on the British name. An act was passed for limiting the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The bargain which Hastings had made with the Chief Justice was condemned in the strongest terms; and an address was presented to the King, praying that Impey might be ordered home to answer for his misdeeds.

Impey was recalled by a letter from the Secretary of State. But the proprietors of India Stock resolutely refused to dismiss Hastings from their service, and passed a resolution affirming, what was undeniably true, that they were entrusted by law with the right of naming and removing their Governor-General, and that they were not bound to obey the directions of a single branch of the legislature with respect to such nomination or removal.

Thus supported by his employers, Hastings remained at the head of the government of Bengal till the spring of 1785. His administration, so eventful and stormy, closed in almost perfect quiet. In the Council there was no regular opposition to his measures. Peace was restored to India. The Mahratta war had ceased. Hyder was no more. A treaty had been concluded with his son Tippoo; and the Carnatic had been evacuated by the armies of Mysore. Since the termination of the American war, England had no European enemy or rival in the Eastern seas.

On a general review of the long administration of Hastings, it is impossible to deny that, against the

great crimes by which it is blemished, we have to set off great public services. England had passed through a perilous crisis. She still, indeed, maintained her place in the foremost rank of European powers; and the manner in which she had defended herself against fearful odds had inspired surrounding nations with a high opinion both of her spirit and of her strength. Nevertheless, in every part of the world, except one, she had been a loser. Not only had she been compelled to acknowledge the independence of thirteen colonies peopled by her children, and to conciliate the Irish by giving up the right of legislating for them; but, in the Mediterranean, in the Gulf of Mexico, on the coast of Africa, on the continent of America, she had been compelled to cede the fruits of her victories in former wars. Spain regained Minorca and Florida; France regained Senegal, Goree, and several West Indian Islands. The only quarter of the world in which Britain had lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings. In spite of the utmost exertions both of European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our country in the East had been greatly augmented. Benares was subjected; the Nabob Vizier reduced to vassalage. That our influence had been thus extended, nay, that Fort William and Fort St. George had not been occupied by hostile armies, was owing, if we may trust the general voice of the English in India, to the skill and resolution of Hastings.

His internal administration, with all its blemishes, gives him a title to be considered as one of the most remarkable men in our history. He dissolved the double government. He transferred the direction of affairs to English hands. Out of a frightful anarchy, he educed at least a rude and imperfect order. The whole organization by which justice was dispensed, revenue collected, peace maintained throughout a

THE RIGHT HON. WARREN HASTINGS.

From the original painting by Tilly Kettle in the National Portrait Gallery.

territory not inferior in population to the dominions of Louis the Sixteenth or of the Emperor Joseph, was formed and superintended by him. He boasted that every public office, without exception, which existed when he left Bengal, was his creation. It is quite true that this system, after all the improvements suggested by the experience of sixty years, still needs improvement, and that it was at first far more defective than it now is. But whoever seriously considers what it is to construct from the beginning the whole of a machine so vast and complex as a government will allow that what Hastings effected deserves high admiration. To compare the most celebrated European ministers to him seems to us as unjust as it would be to compare the best baker in London with Robinson Crusoe, who, before he could bake a single loaf, had to make his plough and his harrow, his fences and his scarecrows, his sickle and his flail, his mill and his oven.

The just fame of Hastings rises still higher, when we reflect that he was not bred a statesman; that he was sent from school to a counting-house; and that he was employed during the prime of his manhood as a commercial agent, far from all intellectual society.

Nor must we forget that all, or almost all, to whom, when placed at the head of affairs, he could apply for assistance, were persons who owed as little as himself, or less than himself, to education. A minister in Europe finds himself, on the first day on which he commences his functions, surrounded by experienced public servants, the depositaries of official traditions. Hastings had no such help. His own reflection, his own energy, were to supply the place of all Downing Street and Somerset House. Having had no facilities for learning, he was forced to teach. He had first to form himself, and then to form his instruments; and this not in a single

department, but in all the departments of the administration.

It must be added that, while engaged in this most arduous task, he was constantly trammelled by orders from home, and frequently borne down by a majority in council. The preservation of an Empire from a formidable combination of foreign enemies, the construction of a government in all its parts, were accomplished by him, while every ship brought out bales of censure from his employers, and while the records of every consultation were filled with acrimonious minutes by his colleagues. We believe that there never was a public man whose temper was so severely tried; not Marlborough, when thwarted by the Dutch Deputies; not Wellington, when he had to deal at once with the Portuguese Regency, the Spanish Juntas, and Mr. Perceval. But the temper of Hastings was equal to almost any trial. It was not sweet; but it was calm. Quick and vigorous as his intellect was, the patience with which he endured the most cruel vexations, till a remedy could be found, resembled the patience of stupidity. He seems to have been capable of resentment, bitter and long-enduring; yet his resentment so seldom hurried him into any blunder that it may be doubted whether what appeared to be revenge was any thing but policy.

The effect of this singular equanimity was that he always had the full command of all the resources of one of the most fertile minds that ever existed. Accordingly no complication of perils and embarrassments could perplex him. For every difficulty he had a contrivance ready; and, whatever may be thought of the justice and humanity of some of his contrivances, it is certain that they seldom failed to serve the purpose for which they were designed.

Together with this extraordinary talent for de-

vising expedients, Hastings possessed, in a very high degree, another talent scarcely less necessary to a man in his situation; we mean the talent for conducting political controversy. It is as necessary to an English statesman in the East that he should be able to write, as it is to a minister in this country that he should be able to speak. It is chiefly by the oratory of a public man here that the nation judges of his powers. It is from the letters and reports of a public man in India that the dispensers of patronage form their estimate of him. In each case, the talent which receives peculiar encouragement is developed, perhaps at the expense of the other powers. In this country, we sometimes hear men speak above their abilities. It is not very unusual to find gentlemen in the Indian service who write above their abilities. The English politician is a little too much of a debater: the Indian politician a little too much of an essayist.

Of the numerous servants of the Company who have distinguished themselves as framers of minutes and despatches, Hastings stands at the head. He was indeed the person who gave to the official writing of the Indian governments the character which it still retains. He was matched against no common antagonist. But even Francis was forced to acknowledge, with sullen and resentful candour, that there was no contending against the pen of Hastings. And, in truth, the Governor-General's power of making out a case, of perplexing what it was inconvenient that people should understand, and of setting in the clearest point of view whatever would bear the light, was incomparable. His style must be praised with some reservation. It was in general forcible, pure, and polished; but it was sometimes, though not often, turgid, and, on one or two occasions, even bombastic. Perhaps the fondness of

Hastings for Persian literature may have tended to corrupt his taste.

And, since we have referred to his literary tastes, it would be most unjust not to praise the judicious encouragement which, as a ruler, he gave to liberal studies and curious researches. His patronage was extended, with prudent generosity, to voyages, travels, experiments, publications. He did little, it is true, towards introducing into India the learning of the West. To make the young natives of Bengal familiar with Milton and Adam Smith, to substitute the geography, astronomy, and surgery of Europe for the dotages of the Brahminical superstition, or for the imperfect science of ancient Greece transfused through Arabian expositions, this was a scheme reserved to crown the beneficent administration of a far more virtuous ruler. Still, it is impossible to refuse high commendation to a man who, taken from a ledger to govern an empire, overwhelmed by public business, surrounded by people as busy as himself, and separated by thousands of leagues from almost all literary society, gave, both by his example and by his munificence, a great impulse to learning. In Persian and Arabic literature he was deeply skilled. With the Sanscrit he was not himself acquainted; but those who first brought that language to the knowledge of European students owed much to his encouragement. It was under his protection that the Asiatic Society commenced its honourable career. That distinguished body selected him to be its first president; but, with excellent taste and feeling, he declined the honour in favour of Sir William Jones. But the chief advantage which the students of Oriental letters derived from his patronage remains to be mentioned. The Pundits of Bengal had always looked with great jealousy on the attempts of foreigners to pry into those mysteries which were locked up in the sacred

dialect. The Brahminical religion had been persecuted by the Mahommedans. What the Hindoos knew of the spirit of the Portuguese government might warrant them in apprehending persecution from Christians. That apprehension, the wisdom and moderation of Hastings removed. He was the first foreign ruler who succeeded in gaining the confidence of the hereditary priests of India, and who induced them to lay open to English scholars the secrets of the old Brahminical theology and jurisprudence.

It is indeed impossible to deny that, in the great art of inspiring large masses of human beings with confidence and attachment, no ruler ever surpassed Hastings. If he had made himself popular with the English by giving up the Bengalese to extortion and oppression, or if, on the other hand, he had conciliated the Bengalese and alienated the English, there would have been no cause for wonder. What is peculiar to him is that, being the chief of a small band of strangers who exercised boundless power over a great indigenous population, he made himself beloved both by the subject many and by the dominant few. The affection felt for him by the civil service was singularly ardent and constant. Through all his disasters and perils, his brethren stood by him with steadfast loyalty. The army, at the same time, loved him as armies have seldom loved any but the greatest chiefs who have led them to victory. Even in his disputes with distinguished military men, he could always count on the support of the military profession. While such was his empire over the hearts of his countrymen, he enjoyed among the natives a popularity, such as other governors have perhaps better merited, but such as no other governor has been able to attain. He spoke their vernacular dialects with facility and precision. He was inti-

mately acquainted with their feelings and usages. On one or two occasions, for great ends, he deliberately acted in defiance of their opinion; but on such occasions he gained more in their respect than he lost in their love. In general, he carefully avoided all that could shock their national or religious prejudices. His administration was indeed in many respects faulty; but the Bengalee standard of good government was not high. Under the Nabobs, the hurricane of Mahratta cavalry had passed annually over the rich alluvial plain. But even the Mahratta shrank from a conflict with the mighty children of the sea; and the immense rice-harvests of the Lower Ganges were safely gathered in, under the protection of the English sword. The first English conquerors had been more rapacious and merciless even than the Mahrattas; but that generation had passed away. Defective as was the police, heavy as were the public burdens, it is probable that the oldest man in Bengal could not recollect a season of equal security and prosperity. For the first time within living memory, the province was placed under a government strong enough to prevent others from robbing, and not inclined to play the robber itself. These things inspired good-will. At the same time, the constant success of Hastings and the manner in which he extricated himself from every difficulty made him an object of superstitious admiration; and the more than regal splendour which he sometimes displayed dazzled a people who have much in common with children. Even now, after the lapse of more than fifty years, the natives of India still talk of him as the greatest of the English; and the nurses sing children to sleep with a jingling ballad about the fleet horses and richly caparisoned elephants of Sahib Warren Hostein.

The gravest offences of which Hastings was guilty

did not affect his popularity with the people of Bengal; for those offences were committed against neighbouring states. Those offences, as our readers must have perceived, we are not disposed to vindicate; yet, in order that the censure may be justly apportioned to the transgression, it is fit that the motive of the criminal should be taken into consideration. The motive which prompted the worst acts of Hastings was misdirected and ill-regulated public spirit. The rules of justice, the sentiments of humanity, the plighted faith of treaties, were in his view as nothing, when opposed to the immediate interest of the state. This is no justification, according to the principles either of morality, or of what we believe to be identical with morality, namely, far-sighted policy. Nevertheless the common sense of mankind, which in questions of this sort seldom goes far wrong, will always recognise a distinction between crimes which originate in an inordinate zeal for the commonwealth, and crimes which originate in selfish cupidity. To the benefit of this distinction Hastings is fairly entitled. There is, we conceive, no reason to suspect that the Rohilla war, the revolution of Benares, or the spoliation of the Princesses of Oude, added a rupee to his fortune. We will not affirm that, in all pecuniary dealings, he showed that punctilious integrity, that dread of the faintest appearance of evil, which is now the glory of the Indian civil service. But when the school in which he had been trained and the temptations to which he was exposed are considered, we are more inclined to praise him for his general uprightness with respect to money, than rigidly to blame him for a few transactions which would now be called indelicate and irregular, but which even now would hardly be designated as corrupt. A rapacious man he certainly was not. Had he been so he would infallibly

have returned to his country the richest subject in Europe. We speak within compass, when we say that, without applying any extraordinary pressure, he might easily have obtained from the zemindars of the Company's provinces and from neighbouring princes, in the course of thirteen years, more than three millions sterling, and might have outshone the splendour of Carlton House and of the *Palais Royal*. He brought home a fortune such as a Governor-General, fond of state, and careless of thrift, might easily, during so long a tenure of office, save out of his legal salary. Mrs. Hastings, we are afraid, was less scrupulous. It was generally believed that she accepted presents with great alacrity, and that she thus formed, without the connivance of her husband, a private hoard amounting to several lacs of rupees. We are the more inclined to give credit to this story, because Mr. Gleig, who cannot but have heard it, does not, as far as we have observed, notice or contradict it.

The influence of Mrs. Hastings over her husband was indeed such that she might easily have obtained much larger sums than she was ever accused of receiving. At length her health began to give way; and the Governor-General, much against his will, was compelled to send her to England. He seems to have loved her with that love which is peculiar to men of strong minds, to men whose affection is not easily won or widely diffused. The talk of Calcutta ran for some time on the luxurious manner in which he fitted up the round-house of an Indiaman for her accommodation, on the profusion of sandal-wood and carved ivory which adorned her cabin, and on the thousands of rupees which had been expended in order to procure for her the society of an agreeable female companion during the voyage. We may remark here that the letters of Hastings to his wife are

exceedingly characteristic. They are tender, and full of indications of esteem and confidence; but, at the same time, a little more ceremonious than is usual in so intimate a relation. The solemn courtesy with which he compliments "his elegant Marian" reminds us now and then of the dignified air with which Sir Charles Grandison bowed over Miss Byron's hand in the cedar parlour.

After some months Hastings prepared to follow his wife to England. When it was announced that he was about to quit his office, the feeling of the society which he had so long governed manifested itself by many signs. Addresses poured in from Europeans and Asiatics, from civil functionaries, soldiers, and traders. On the day on which he delivered up the keys of office, a crowd of friends and admirers formed a lane to the quay where he embarked. Several barges escorted him far down the river; and some attached friends refused to quit him till the low coast of Bengal was fading from the view, and till the pilot was leaving the ship.

Of his voyage little is known, except that he amused himself with books and with his pen; and that, among the compositions by which he beguiled the tediousness of that long leisure, was a pleasing imitation of Horace's *Otium Divos rogat.* This little poem was inscribed to Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, a man of whose integrity, humanity, and honour, it is impossible to speak too highly; but who, like some other excellent members of the civil service, extended to the conduct of his friend Hastings an indulgence of which his own conduct never stood in need.

The voyage was, for those times, very speedy. Hastings was little more than four months on the sea. In June, 1785, he landed at Plymouth, posted to London, appeared at Court, paid his respects in

Leadenhall Street, and then retired with his wife to Cheltenham.

He was greatly pleased with his reception. The King treated him with marked distinction. The Queen, who had already incurred much censure on account of the favour which, in spite of the ordinary severity of her virtue, she had shown to the "elegant Marian," was not less gracious to Hastings. The Directors received him in a solemn sitting; and their chairman read to him a vote of thanks which they had passed without one dissentient voice. "I find myself," said Hastings, in a letter written about a quarter of a year after his arrival in England, "I find myself everywhere, and universally, treated with evidences, apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of my country."

The confident and exulting tone of his correspondence about this time is the more remarkable, because he had already received ample notice of the attack which was in preparation. Within a week after he landed at Plymouth, Burke gave notice in the House of Commons of a motion seriously affecting a gentleman lately returned from India. The session, however, was then so far advanced that it was impossible to enter on so extensive and important a subject.

Hastings, it is clear, was not sensible of the danger of his position. Indeed that sagacity, that judgment, that readiness in devising expedients, which had distinguished him in the East, seemed now to have forsaken him; not that his abilities were at all impaired; not that he was not still the same man who had triumphed over Francis and Nuncomar, who had made the Chief Justice and the Nabob Vizier his tools, who had deposed Cheyte Sing, and repelled Hyder Ali. But an oak, as Mr. Grattan finely said, should not be transplanted at fifty. A man who,

having left England when a boy, returns to it after thirty or forty years passed in India, will find, be his talents what they may, that he has much both to learn and to unlearn before he can take a place among English statesmen. The working of a representative system, the war of parties, the arts of debate, the influence of the press, are startling novelties to him. Surrounded on every side by new machines and new tactics, he is as much bewildered as Hannibal would have been at Waterloo, or Themistocles at Trafalgar. His very acuteness deludes him. His very vigour causes him to stumble. The more correct his maxims, when applied to the state of society to which he is accustomed, the more certain they are to lead him astray. This was strikingly the case with Hastings. In India he had a bad hand; but he was master of the game, and he won every stake. In England he held excellent cards, if he had known how to play them; and it was chiefly by his own errors that he was brought to the verge of ruin.

Of all his errors the most serious was perhaps the choice of a champion. Clive, in similar circumstances, had made a singularly happy selection. He put himself into the hands of Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough, one of the few great advocates who have also been great in the House of Commons. To the defence of Clive, therefore, nothing was wanting, neither learning nor knowledge of the world, neither forensic acuteness nor that eloquence which charms political assemblies. Hastings entrusted his interests to a very different person, a major in the Bengal army, named Scott. This gentleman had been sent over from India some time before as the agent of the Governor-General. It was rumoured that his services were rewarded with Oriental munificence; and we believe that he received much more than Hastings could conveniently spare.

The Major obtained a seat in Parliament, and was there regarded as the organ of his employer. It was evidently impossible that a gentleman so situated could speak with the authority which belongs to an independent position. Nor had the agent of Hastings the talents necessary for obtaining the ear of an assembly which, accustomed to listen to great orators, had naturally become fastidious. He was always on his legs; he was very tedious; and he had only one topic, the merits and wrongs of Hastings. Every body who knows the House of Commons will easily guess what followed. The Major was soon considered as the greatest bore of his time. His exertions were not confined to Parliament. There was hardly a day on which the newspapers did not contain some puff upon Hastings, signed *Asiaticus* or *Bengalensis*, but known to be written by the indefatigable Scott; and hardly a month in which some bulky pamphlet on the same subject, and from the same pen, did not pass to the trunk-makers and the pastry-cooks. As to this gentleman's capacity for conducting a delicate question through Parliament, our readers will want no evidence beyond that which they will find in letters preserved in these volumes. We will give a single specimen of his temper and judgment. He designated the greatest man then living as "that reptile Mr. Burke."

In spite, however, of this unfortunate choice, the general aspect of affairs was favourable to Hastings. The King was on his side. The Company and its servants were zealous in his cause. Among public men he had many ardent friends. Such were Lord Mansfield, who had outlived the vigour of his body, but not that of his mind; and Lord Lansdowne, who, though unconnected with any party, retained the importance which belongs to great talents and knowledge. The ministers were generally believed

to be favourable to the late Governor-General. They owed their power to the clamour which had been raised against Mr. Fox's East India Bill. The authors of that bill, when accused of invading vested rights, and of setting up powers unknown to the constitution, had defended themselves by pointing to the crimes of Hastings, and by arguing that abuses so extraordinary justified extraordinary measures. Those who, by opposing that bill, had raised themselves to the head of affairs, would naturally be inclined to extenuate the evils which had been made the plea for administering so violent a remedy; and such, in fact, was their general disposition. The Lord Chancellor Thurlow, in particular, whose great place and force of intellect gave him a weight in the government inferior only to that of Mr. Pitt, espoused the cause of Hastings with indecorous violence. Mr. Pitt, though he had censured many parts of the Indian system, had studiously abstained from saying a word against the late chief of the Indian government. To Major Scott, indeed, the young minister had in private extolled Hastings as a great, a wonderful man, who had the highest claims on the government. There was only one objection to granting all that so eminent a servant of the public could ask. The resolution of censure still remained on the Journals of the House of Commons. That resolution was, indeed, unjust; but, till it was rescinded, could the minister advise the King to bestow any mark of approbation on the person censured? If Major Scott is to be trusted, Mr. Pitt declared that this was the only reason which prevented the advisers of the Crown from conferring a peerage on the late Governor-General. Mr. Dundas was the only important member of the administration who was deeply committed to a different view of the subject. He had moved the resolution which created the

difficulty; but even from him little was to be apprehended. Since he had presided over the committee on Eastern affairs, great changes had taken place. He was surrounded by new allies; he had fixed his hopes on new objects; and whatever may have been his good qualities,—and he had many,—flattery itself never reckoned rigid consistency in the number.

From the ministry, therefore, Hastings had every reason to expect support; and the ministry was very powerful. The opposition was loud and vehement against him. But the opposition, though formidable from the wealth and influence of some of its members, and from the admirable talents and eloquence of others, was outnumbered in parliament, and odious throughout the country. Nor, as far as we can judge, was the opposition generally desirous to engage in so serious an undertaking as the impeachment of an Indian Governor. Such an impeachment must last for years. It must impose on the chiefs of the party an immense load of labour. Yet it could scarcely, in any manner, affect the event of the great political game. The followers of the coalition were therefore more inclined to revile Hastings than to prosecute him. They lost no opportunity of coupling his name with the names of the most hateful tyrants of whom history makes mention. The wits of Brooks's aimed their keenest sarcasms both at his public and at his domestic life. Some fine diamonds which he had presented, as it was rumoured, to the royal family, and a certain richly carved ivory bed which the Queen had done him the honour to accept from him, were favourite subjects of ridicule. One lively poet proposed that the great acts of the fair Marian's present husband should be immortalized by the pencil of his predecessor; and that Imhoff should be employed to embellish the House of Commons with paintings of the bleeding Rohillas, of Nuncomar

swinging, of Cheyte Sing letting himself down to the Ganges. Another, in an exquisitely humorous parody of Virgil's third eclogue, propounded the question what that mineral could be of which the rays had power to make the most austere of princesses the friend of a wanton. A third described, with gay malevolence, the gorgeous appearance of Mrs. Hastings at St. James's, the galaxy of jewels, torn from Indian Begums, which adorned her head-dress, her necklace gleaming with future votes, and the depending questions that shone upon her ears. Satirical attacks of this description, and perhaps a motion for a vote of censure, would have satisfied the great body of the opposition. But there were two men whose indignation was not to be so appeased, Philip Francis and Edmund Burke.

Francis had recently entered the House of Commons, and had already established a character there for industry and ability. He laboured indeed under one most unfortunate defect, want of fluency. But he occasionally expressed himself with a dignity and energy worthy of the greatest orators. Before he had been many days in parliament, he incurred the bitter dislike of Pitt, who constantly treated him with as much asperity as the laws of debate would allow. Neither lapse of years nor change of scene had mitigated the enmities which Francis had brought back from the East. After his usual fashion, he mistook his malevolence for virtue, nursed it, as preachers tell us that we ought to nurse our good dispositions, and paraded it, on all occasions, with Pharisaical ostentation.

The zeal of Burke was still fiercer; but it was far purer. Men unable to understand the elevation of his mind have tried to find out some discreditable motive for the vehemence and pertinacity which he showed on this occasion. But they have altogether

failed. The idle story that he had some private slight to revenge has long been given up, even by the advocates of Hastings. Mr. Gleig supposes that Burke was actuated by party spirit, that he retained a bitter remembrance of the fall of the coalition, that he attributed that fall to the exertions of the East India interest, and that he considered Hastings as the head and the representative of that interest. This explanation seems to be sufficiently refuted by a reference to dates. The hostility of Burke to Hastings commenced long before the coalition; and lasted long after Burke had become a strenuous supporter of those by whom the coalition had been defeated. It began when Burke and Fox, closely allied together, were attacking the influence of the crown, and calling for peace with the American republic. It continued till Burke, alienated from Fox, and loaded with the favours of the crown, died, preaching a crusade against the French republic. We surely cannot attribute to the events of 1784 an enmity which began in 1781, and which retained undiminished force long after persons far more deeply implicated than Hastings in the events of 1784 had been cordially forgiven. And why should we look for any other explanation of Burke's conduct than that which we find on the surface? The plain truth is that Hastings had committed some great crimes, and that the thought of those crimes made the blood of Burke boil in his veins. For Burke was a man in whom compassion for suffering, and hatred of injustice and tyranny, were as strong as in Las Casas or Clarkson. And although in him, as in Las Casas and in Clarkson, these noble feelings were alloyed with the infirmity which belongs to human nature, he is, like them, entitled to this great praise, that he devoted years of intense labour to the service of a people with whom he had neither blood nor language, neither religion

nor manners in common, and from whom no requital, no thanks, no applause could be expected.

His knowledge of India was such as few, even of those Europeans who have passed many years in that country, have attained, and such as certainly was never attained by any public man who had not quitted Europe. He had studied the history, the laws, and the usages of the East with an industry such as is seldom found united to so much genius and so much sensibility. Others have perhaps been equally laborious, and have collected an equal mass of materials. But the manner in which Burke brought his higher powers of intellect to work on statements of facts, and on tables of figures, was peculiar to himself. In every part of those huge bales of Indian information which repelled almost all other readers, his mind, at once philosophical and poetical, found something to instruct or to delight. His reason analysed and digested those vast and shapeless masses; his imagination animated and coloured them. Out of darkness and dulness, and confusion, he formed a multitude of ingenious theories and vivid pictures. He had, in the highest degree, that noble faculty whereby man is able to live in the past and in the future, in the distant and in the unreal. India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning sun, the strange vegetation of the palm and the cocoa tree, the rice-field, the tank, the huge trees, older than the Mogul empire, under which the village crowds assemble, the thatched roof of the peasant's hut, the rich tracery of the mosque where the imaum prays with his face to Mecca, the drums, and banners, and gaudy idols, the devotee swinging in the air, the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the river-side, the black faces, the long beards, the yellow

streaks of sect, the turbans and the flowing robes, the spears and the silver maces, the elephants with their canopies of state, the gorgeous palanquin of the prince, and the close litter of the noble lady, all these things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed, as the objects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James's Street. All India was present to the eye of his mind, from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns to the wild moor where the gipsy camp was pitched, from the bazar, humming like a bee-hive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyænas. He had just as lively an idea of the insurrection at Benares as of Lord George Gordon's riots, and of the execution of Nuncomar as of the execution of Dr. Dodd. Oppression in Bengal was to him the same thing as oppression in the streets of London.

He saw that Hastings had been guilty of some most unjustifiable acts. All that followed was natural and necessary in a mind like Burke's. His imagination and his passions, ~~once excited, hurried~~ him beyond the bounds of justice and good sense. His reason, powerful as it was, became the slave of feelings which it should have controlled. His indignation, virtuous in its origin, acquired too much of the character of personal aversion. He could see no mitigating circumstance, no redeeming merit. His temper, which, though generous and affectionate, had always been irritable, had now been made almost savage by bodily infirmities and mental vexations. Conscious of great powers and great virtues, he found himself, in age and poverty, a mark for the hatred of a perfidious court and a deluded people. In Parliament his eloquence was out of date. A young generation, which knew him not, had filled the House.

Whenever he rose to speak, his voice was drowned by the unseemly interruption of lads who were in their cradles when his orations on the Stamp Act called forth the applause of the great Earl of Chatham. These things had produced on his proud and sensitive spirit an effect at which we cannot wonder. He could no longer discuss any question with calmness, or make allowance for honest differences of opinion. Those who think that he was more violent and acrimonious in debates about India than on other occasions are ill informed respecting the last years of his life. In the discussions on the Commercial Treaty with the Court of Versailles, on the Regency, on the French Revolution, he showed even more virulence than in conducting the impeachment. Indeed it may be remarked that the very persons who called him a mischievous maniac, for condemning in burning words the Rohilla war and the spoliation of the Begums, exalted him into a prophet as soon as he began to declaim, with greater vehemence, and not with greater reason, against the taking of the Bastile and the insults offered to Marie Antoinette. To us he appears to have been neither a maniac in the former case nor a prophet in the latter, but in both cases a great and good man, led into extravagance by a sensibility which domineered over all his faculties.

It may be doubted whether the personal antipathy of Francis, or the nobler indignation of Burke, would have led their party to adopt extreme measures against Hastings, if his own conduct had been judicious. He should have felt that, great as his public services had been, he was not faultless; and should have been content to make his escape, without aspiring to the honours of a triumph. He and his agent took a different view. They were impatient for the rewards which, as they conceived, were deferred only

till Burke's attack should be over. They accordingly resolved to force on a decisive action with an enemy for whom, if they had been wise, they would have made a bridge of gold. On the first day of the session of 1786, Major Scott reminded Burke of the notice given in the preceding year, and asked whether it was seriously intended to bring any charge against the late Governor-General. This challenge left no course open to the Opposition, except to come forward as accusers, or to acknowledge themselves calumniators. The administration of Hastings had not been so blameless, nor was the great party of Fox and North so feeble, that it could be prudent to venture on so bold a defiance. The leaders of the Opposition instantly returned the only answer which they could with honour return; and the whole party was irrevocably pledged to a prosecution.

Burke began his operations by applying for Papers. Some of the documents for which he asked were refused by the ministers, who, in the debate, held language such as strongly confirmed the prevailing opinion, that they intended to support Hastings. In April the charges were laid on the table. They had been drawn by Burke with great ability, though in a form too much resembling that of a pamphlet. Hastings was furnished with a copy of the accusation; and it was intimated to him that he might, if he thought fit, be heard in his own defence at the bar of the Commons.

Here again Hastings was pursued by the same fatality which had attended him ever since the day when he set foot on English ground. It seemed to be decreed that this man, so politic and so successful in the East, should commit nothing but blunders in Europe. Any judicious adviser would have told him that the best thing which he could do would be to

make an eloquent, forcible, and affecting oration at the bar of the House ; but that, if he could not trust himself to speak, and found it necessary to read, he ought to be as concise as possible. Audiences accustomed to extemporaneous debating of the highest excellence are always impatient of long written compositions. Hastings, however, sat down as he would have done at the Government-house in Bengal, and prepared a paper of immense length. That paper, if recorded on the consultations of an Indian administration, would have been justly praised as a very able minute. But it was now out of place. It fell flat, as the best written defence must have fallen flat, on an assembly accustomed to the animated and strenuous conflicts of Pitt and Fox. The members, as soon as their curiosity about the face and demeanour of so eminent a stranger was satisfied, walked away to dinner, and left Hastings to tell his story till midnight to the clerks and the Sergeant-at-arms.

All preliminary steps having been duly taken, Burke, in the beginning of June, brought forward the charge relating to the Rohilla war. He acted discreetly in placing this accusation in the van ; for Dundas had formerly moved, and the House had adopted, a resolution condemning, in the most severe terms, the policy followed by Hastings with regard to Rohilcund. Dundas had little, or rather nothing, to say in defence of his own consistency ; but he put a bold face on the matter, and opposed the motion. Among other things, he declared that, though he still thought the Rohilla war unjustifiable, he considered the services which Hastings had subsequently rendered to the state as sufficient to atone even for so great an offence. Pitt did not speak, but voted with Dundas ; and Hastings was absolved by a hundred and nineteen votes against sixty-seven.

Hastings was now confident of victory. It seemed,

indeed, that he had reason to be so. The Rohilla war was, of all his measures, that which his accusers might with greatest advantage assail. It had been condemned by the Court of Directors. It had been condemned by the House of Commons. It had been condemned by Mr. Dundas, who had since become the chief minister of the Crown for Indian affairs. Yet Burke, having chosen this strong ground, had been completely defeated on it. That, having failed here, he should succeed on any point, was generally thought impossible. It was rumoured at the clubs and coffee-houses that one or perhaps two more charges would be brought forward, that if, on those charges, the sense of the House of Commons should be against impeachment, the Opposition would let the matter drop, that Hastings would be immediately raised to the peerage, decorated with the star of the Bath, sworn of the privy council, and invited to lend the assistance of his talents and experience to the India board. Lord Thurlow, indeed, some months before, had spoken with contempt of the scruples which prevented Pitt from calling Hastings to the House of Lords; and had even said, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was afraid of the Commons, there was nothing to prevent the Keeper of the Great Seal from taking the royal pleasure about a patent of peerage. The very title was chosen. Hastings was to be Lord Daylesford. For, through all changes of scene and changes of fortune, remained unchanged his attachment to the spot which had witnessed the greatness and the fall of his family, and which had borne so great a part in the first dreams of his young ambition.

But in a very few days these fair prospects were overcast. On the thirteenth of June, Mr. Fox brought forward, with great ability and eloquence, the charge respecting the treatment of Cheyte Sing. Francis

followed on the same side. The friends of Hastings were in high spirits when Pitt rose. With his usual abundance and felicity of language, the Minister gave his opinion on the case. He maintained that the Governor-General was justified in calling on the Rajah of Benares for pecuniary assistance, and in imposing a fine when that assistance was contumaciously withheld. He also thought that the conduct of the Governor-General during the insurrection had been distinguished by ability and presence of mind. He censured, with great bitterness, the conduct of Francis, both in India and in Parliament, as most dishonest and malignant. The necessary inference from Pitt's arguments seemed to be that Hastings ought to be honourably acquitted; and both the friends and the opponents of the Minister expected from him a declaration to that effect. To the astonishment of all parties, he concluded by saying that, though he thought it right in Hastings to fine Cheyte Sing for contumacy, yet the amount of the fine was too great for the occasion. On this ground, and on this ground alone, did Mr. Pitt, applauding every other part of the conduct of Hastings with regard to Benares, declare that he should vote in favour of Mr. Fox's motion.

The House was thunderstruck; and it well might be so. For the wrong done to Cheyte Sing, even had it been as flagitious as Fox and Francis contended, was a trifle when compared with the horrors which had been inflicted on Rohilcund. But if Mr. Pitt's view of the case of Cheyte Sing were correct, there was no ground for an impeachment, or even for a vote of censure. If the offence of Hastings was really no more than this, that, having a right to impose a mulct, the amount of which mulct was not defined, but was left to be settled by his discretion, he had, not for his own advantage, but for that of the state, demanded

too much, was this an offence which required a criminal proceeding of the highest solemnity, a criminal proceeding, to which, during sixty years, no public functionary had been subjected? We can see, we think, in what way a man of sense and integrity might have been induced to take any course respecting Hastings, except the course which Mr. Pitt took. Such a man might have thought a great example necessary, for the preventing of injustice, and for the vindicating the national honour, and might, on that ground, have voted for impeachment both on the Rohilla charge, and on the Benares charge. Such a man might have thought that the offences of Hastings had been atoned for by great services, and might, on that ground, have voted against the impeachment, on both charges. With great diffidence, we give it as our opinion that the most correct course would, on the whole, have been to impeach on the Rohilla charge, and to acquit on the Benares charge. Had the Benares charge appeared to us in the same light in which it appeared to Mr. Pitt, we should, without hesitation, have voted for acquittal on that charge. The one course which it is inconceivable that any man of a tenth part of Mr. Pitt's abilities can have honestly taken was the course which he took. He acquitted Hastings on the Rohilla charge. He softened down the Benares charge till it became no charge at all; and then he pronounced that it contained matter for impeachment.

Nor must it be forgotten that the principal reason assigned by the ministry for not impeaching Hastings on account of the Rohilla war was this, that the delinquencies of the early part of his administration had been atoned for by the excellence of the later part. Was it not most extraordinary that men who had held this language could afterwards vote that the later part of his administration

furnished matter for no less than twenty articles of impeachment? They first represented the conduct of Hastings in 1780 and 1781 as so highly meritorious that, like works of supererogation in the Catholic theology, it ought to be efficacious for the cancelling of former offences; and they then prosecuted him for his conduct in 1780 and 1781.

The general astonishment was the greater, because, only twenty-four hours before, the members on whom the Minister could depend had received the usual notes from the Treasury, begging them to be in their places and to vote against Mr. Fox's motion. It was asserted by Mr. Hastings that, early on the morning of the very day on which the debate took place, Dundas called on Pitt, woke him, and was closeted with him many hours. The result of this conference was a determination to give up the late Governor-General to the vengeance of the Opposition. It was impossible even for the most powerful minister to carry all his followers with him in so strange a course. Several persons high in office, the Attorney-General, Mr. Grenville, and Lord Mulgrave, divided against Mr. Pitt. But the devoted adherents who stood by the head of the government without asking questions, were sufficiently numerous to turn the scale. A hundred and nineteen members voted for Mr. Fox's motion; seventy-nine against it. Dundas silently followed Pitt.

That good and great man, the late William Wilberforce, often related the events of this remarkable night. He described the amazement of the House, and the bitter reflections which were muttered against the Prime Minister by some of the habitual supporters of government. Pitt himself appeared to feel that his conduct required some explanation. He left the treasury bench, sat for some time next to Mr. Wilberforce, and very earnestly declared that he had

found it impossible, as a man of conscience, to stand any longer by Hastings. The business, he said, was too bad. Mr. Wilberforce, we are bound to add, fully believed that his friend was sincere, and that the suspicions to which this mysterious affair gave rise were altogether unfounded.

Those suspicions, indeed, were such as it is painful to mention. The friends of Hastings, most of whom, it is to be observed, generally supported the administration, affirmed that the motive of Pitt and Dundas was jealousy. Hastings was personally a favourite with the King. He was the idol of the East India Company and of its servants. If he were absolved by the Commons, seated among the Lords, admitted to the Board of Control, closely allied with the strongminded and imperious Thurlow, was it not almost certain that he would soon draw to himself the entire management of Eastern affairs? Was it not possible that he might become a formidable rival in the cabinet? It had probably got abroad that very singular communications had taken place between Thurlow and Major Scott, and that, if the first Lord of the Treasury was afraid to recommend Hastings for a peerage, the Chancellor was ready to take the responsibility of that step on himself. Of all ministers, Pitt was the least likely to submit with patience to such an encroachment on his functions. If the Commons impeached Hastings, all danger was at an end. The proceeding, however it might terminate, would probably last some years. In the meantime, the accused person would be excluded from honours and public employments, and could scarcely venture even to pay his duty at court. Such were the motives attributed by a great part of the public to the young minister, whose ruling passion was generally believed to be avarice of power.

The prorogation soon interrupted the discussions

respecting Hastings. In the following year, those discussions were resumed. The charge touching the spoliation of the Begums was brought forward by Sheridan, in a speech which was so imperfectly reported that it may be said to be wholly lost, but which was, without doubt, the most elaborately brilliant of all the productions of his ingenious mind. The impression which it produced was such as has never been equalled. He sat down, not merely amidst cheering, but amidst the loud clapping of hands, in which the Lords below the bar and the strangers in the gallery joined. The excitement of the House was such that no other speaker could obtain a hearing; and the debate was adjourned. The ferment spread fast through the town. Within four and twenty hours, Sheridan was offered a thousand pounds for the copyright of the speech, if he would himself correct it for the press. The impression made by this remarkable display of eloquence on severe and experienced critics, whose discernment may be supposed to have been quickened by emulation, was deep and permanent. Mr. Windham, twenty years later, said that the speech deserved all its fame, and was, in spite of some faults of taste, such as were seldom wanting either in the literary or in the parliamentary performances of Sheridan, the finest that had been delivered within the memory of man. Mr. Fox, about the same time, being asked by the late Lord Holland what was the best speech ever made in the House of Commons, assigned the first place, without hesitation, to the great oration of Sheridan on the Oude charge.

When the debate was resumed, the tide ran so strongly against the accused that his friends were coughed and scraped down. Pitt declared himself for Sheridan's motion; and the question was carried by a hundred and seventy-five votes against sixty-eight.

The Opposition, flushed with victory and strongly supported by the public sympathy, proceeded to bring forward a succession of charges relating chiefly to pecuniary transactions. The friends of Hastings were discouraged, and, having now no hope of being able to avert an impeachment, were not very strenuous in their exertions. At length the House, having agreed to twenty articles of charge, directed Burke to go before the Lords, and to impeach the late Governor-General of High Crimes and Misdemeanours. Hastings was at the same time arrested by the Sergeant-at-arms, and carried to the bar of the Peers.

The session was now within ten days of its close. It was, therefore, impossible that any progress could be made in the trial till the next year. Hastings was admitted to bail; and further proceedings were postponed till the Houses should re-assemble.

When Parliament met in the following winter, the Commons proceeded to elect a committee for managing the impeachment. Burke stood at the head; and with him were associated most of the leading members of the Opposition. But when the name of Francis was read a fierce contention arose. It was said that Francis and Hastings were notoriously on bad terms, that they had been at feud during many years, that on one occasion their mutual aversion had impelled them to seek each other's lives, and that it would be improper and indelicate to select a private enemy to be a public accuser. It was urged on the other side with great force, particularly by Mr. Windham, that impartiality, though the first duty of a judge, had never been reckoned among the qualities of an advocate; that in the ordinary administration of criminal justice among the English, the aggrieved party, the very last person who ought to be admitted into the jury-box, is the prosecutor; that what was

wanted in a manager was, not that he should be free from bias, but that he should be able, well-informed, energetic, and active. The ability and information of Francis were admitted; and the very animosity with which he was reproached, whether a virtue or a vice, was at least a pledge for his energy and activity. It seems difficult to refute these arguments. But the inveterate hatred borne by Francis to Hastings had excited general disgust. The House decided that Francis should not be a manager. Pitt voted with the majority, Dundas with the minority.

In the meantime, the preparations for the trial had proceeded rapidly; and on the thirteenth of February, 1788, the sittings of the Court commenced. There have been spectacles more dazzling to the eye, more gorgeous with jewellery and cloth of gold, more attractive to grown-up children, than that which was then exhibited at Westminster; but, perhaps, there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated, a reflecting, an imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interest which belong to the near and to the distant, to the present and to the past, were collected on one spot, and in one hour. All the talents and all the accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilisation, were now displayed, with every advantage that could be derived both from co-operation and from contrast. Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backward, through many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid, or far away, over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky nations living under strange stars, worshipping strange gods, and writing strange characters from right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit, according to forms handed down from the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the lord of the holy city of

Benares, and over the ladies of the princely house of Oude.

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers. The streets were kept clear by cavalry. The peers, robed in gold and ermine, were marshalled by the heralds under Garter King-at-arms. The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords, three fourths of the Upper House as the Upper House then was, walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal. The junior baron present led the way, George Eliott, Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defence of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain. The long procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of the realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the King. Last of all came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The grey old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the Queen the fair-

haired young daughters of the house of Brunswick. There the Ambassadors of great Kings and Commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen, side by side, the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labours in that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition, a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid. There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There too was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race, the Saint Cecilia whose delicate features, lighted up by love and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticized, and exchanged repartees, under the rich peacock-hangings of Mrs. Montague. And there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury, shone round Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire.

The Sergeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar, and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He

had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself, that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory, except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect, a high and intellectual forehead, a brow pensive, but not gloomy, a mouth of inflexible decision, a face pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council-chamber at Calcutta, *Mens æqua in arduis*; such was the aspect with which the great proconsul presented himself to his judges.

His counsel accompanied him, men all of whom were afterwards raised by their talents and learning to the highest posts in their profession, the bold and strong-minded Law, afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench; the more humane and eloquent Dallas, afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; and Plomer who, near twenty years later, successfully conducted in the same high court the defence of Lord Melville, and subsequently became Vice-chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

But neither the culprit nor his advocates attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red drapery, a space had been fitted up with green benches and tables for the Commons. The managers, with Burke at their head, appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox, generally so regardless of his appearance, had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a bag and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment; and

his commanding, copious, and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor; and his friends were left without the help of his excellent sense, his tact, and his urbanity. But, in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides. There was Burke, ignorant, indeed, or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers, but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator, ancient or modern. There, with eyes reverentially fixed on Burke, appeared the finest gentleman of the age, his form developed by every manly exercise, his face beaming with intelligence and spirit, the ingenious, the chivalrous, the high-souled Windham. Nor, though surrounded by such men, did the youngest manager pass unnoticed. At an age when most of those who distinguish themselves in life are still contending for prizes and fellowships at college, he had won for himself a conspicuous place in parliament. No advantage of fortune or connexion was wanting that could set off to the height his splendid talents and his unblemished honour. At twenty-three he had been thought worthy to be ranked with the veteran statesmen who appeared as the delegates of the British Commons, at the bar of the British nobility. All who stood at that bar, save him alone, are gone, culprit, advocates, accusers. To the generation which is now in the vigour of life, he is the sole representative of a great age which has passed away. But those who, within the last ten

years, have listened with delight, till the morning sun shone on the tapestries of the House of Lords, to the lofty and animated eloquence of Charles Earl Grey, are able to form some estimate of the powers of a race of men among whom he was not the foremost.

The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The ceremony occupied two whole days, and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the clerk of the court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges. With an exuberance of thought and a splendour of diction which more than satisfied the highly raised expectation of the audience, he described the character and institutions of the natives of India, recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated, and set forth the constitution of the Company and of the English Presidencies. Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society, as vivid as that which existed in his own mind, he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law. The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stern and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out; smelling-bottles were handed round; hysterical sobs and screams were heard; and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the

orator concluded. Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, "Therefore," said he, "hath it with all confidence been ordered by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanours. I impeach him in the name of the Commons' House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honour he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under foot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all."

When the deep murmur of various emotions had subsided, Mr. Fox rose to address the Lords respecting the course of proceeding to be followed. The wish of the accusers was that the Court would bring to a close the investigation of the first charge before the second was opened. The wish of Hastings and of his counsel was that the managers should open all the charges, and produce all the evidence for the prosecution, before the defence began. The Lords retired to their own House to consider the question. The Chancellor took the side of Hastings. Lord Loughborough, who was now in opposition, supported the demand of the managers. The division showed which way the inclination of the tribunal leaned. A majority of near three to one decided in favour of the course for which Hastings contended.

When the Court sat again, Mr. Fox, assisted by Mr. Grey, opened the charge respecting Cheyte Sing, and several days were spent in reading papers and hearing witnesses. The next article was that relating to the Princesses of Oude. The conduct of this part of the case was entrusted to Sheridan. The curiosity

of the public to hear him was unbounded. His sparkling and highly finished declamation lasted two days; but the Hall was crowded to suffocation during the whole time. It was said that fifty guineas had been paid for a single ticket. Sheridan, when he concluded, contrived, with a knowledge of stage-effect which his father might have envied, to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration.

June was now far advanced. The session could not last much longer; and the progress which had been made in the impeachment was not very satisfactory. There were twenty charges. On two only of these had even the case for the prosecution been heard; and it was now a year since Hastings had been admitted to bail.

The interest taken by the public in the trial was great when the Court began to sit, and rose to the height when Sheridan spoke on the charge relating to the Begums. From that time the excitement went down fast. The spectacle had lost the attraction of novelty. The great displays of rhetoric were over. What was behind was not of a nature to entice men of letters from their books in the morning, or to tempt ladies who had left the masquerade at two to be out of bed before eight. There remained examinations and cross-examinations. There remained statements of accounts. There remained the reading of papers, filled with words unintelligible to English ears, with lacs and crores, zemindars and aumils, sunnuds and perwannahs, jaghires and nuzzurs. There remained bickerings, not always carried on with the best taste or with the best temper, between the managers of the impeachment and the counsel for the defence, particularly between Mr. Burke and Mr. Law. There remained the endless marches and countermarches of the Peers between their House and the Hall: for as

often as a point of law was to be discussed, their lordships retired to discuss it apart; and the consequence was, as a Peer wittily said, that the Judges walked and the trial stood still.

It is to be added that, in the spring of 1788, when the trial commenced, no important question, either of domestic or foreign policy, occupied the public mind. The proceeding in Westminster Hall, therefore, naturally attracted most of the attention of Parliament and of the public. It was the one great event of that season. But in the following year the King's illness, the debates on the Regency, the expectation of a change of Ministry, completely diverted public attention from Indian affairs; and within a fortnight after George the Third had returned thanks in St. Paul's for his recovery, the States-General of France met at Versailles. In the midst of the agitation produced by these events, the impeachment was for a time almost forgotten.

The trial in the Hall went on languidly. In the session of 1788, when the proceedings had the interest of novelty, and when the Peers had little other business before them, only thirty-five days were given to the impeachment. In 1789, the Regency Bill occupied the Upper House till the session was far advanced. When the King recovered the circuits were beginning. The judges left town; the Lords waited for the return of the oracles of jurisprudence; and the consequence was that during the whole year only seventeen days were given to the case of Hastings. It was clear that the matter would be protracted to a length unprecedented in the annals of criminal law.

In truth, it is impossible to deny that impeachment, though it is a fine ceremony, and though it may have been useful in the seventeenth century, is not a proceeding from which much good can now be expected. Whatever confidence may be placed in the decision

of the Peers on an appeal arising out of ordinary litigation, it is certain that no man has the least confidence in their impartiality, when a great public functionary, charged with a great state crime, is brought to their bar. They are all politicians. There is hardly one among them whose vote on an impeachment may not be confidently predicted before a witness has been examined; and, even if it were possible to rely on their justice, they would still be quite unfit to try such a cause as that of Hastings. They sit only during half the year. They have to transact much legislative and much judicial business. The law-lords, whose advice is required to guide the unlearned majority, are employed daily in administering justice elsewhere. It is impossible, therefore, that during a busy session, the Upper House should give more than a few days to an impeachment. To expect that their Lordships would give up partridge-shooting, in order to bring the greatest delinquent to speedy justice, or to relieve accused innocence by speedy acquittal, would be unreasonable indeed. A well-constituted tribunal, sitting regularly six days in the week, and nine hours in the day, would have brought the trial of Hastings to a close in less than three months. The Lords had not finished their work in seven years.

The result ceased to be matter of doubt, from the time when the Lords resolved that they would be guided by the rules of evidence which are received in the inferior courts of the realm. Those rules, it is well known, exclude much information which would be quite sufficient to determine the conduct of any reasonable man, in the most important transactions of private life. Those rules, at every assizes, save scores of culprits whom judges, jury, and spectators, firmly believe to be guilty. But when those rules were rigidly applied to offences committed many

years before, at the distance of many thousands of miles, conviction was, of course, out of the question. We do not blame the accused and his counsel for availing themselves of every legal advantage in order to obtain an acquittal. But it is clear that an acquittal so obtained cannot be pleaded in bar of the judgment of history.

Several attempts were made by the friends of Hastings to put a stop to the trial. In 1789 they proposed a vote of censure upon Burke, for some violent language which he had used respecting the death of Nuncomar and the connexion between Hastings and Impey. Burke was then unpopular in the last degree both with the House and with the country. The asperity and indecency of some expressions which he had used during the debates on the Regency had annoyed even his warmest friends. The vote of censure was carried; and those who had moved it hoped that the managers would resign in disgust. Burke was deeply hurt. But his zeal for what he considered as the cause of justice and mercy triumphed over his personal feelings. He received the censure of the House with dignity and meekness, and declared that no personal mortification or humiliation should induce him to flinch from the sacred duty which he had undertaken.

In the following year the Parliament was dissolved, and the friends of Hastings entertained a hope that the new House of Commons might not be disposed to go on with the impeachment. They began by maintaining that the whole proceeding was terminated by the dissolution. Defeated on this point, they made a direct motion that the impeachment should be dropped; but they were defeated by the combined forces of the Government and the Opposition. It was, however, resolved that, for the sake of expedition, many of the articles should be withdrawn. In truth,

had not some such measure been adopted, the trial would have lasted till the defendant was in his grave.

At length, in the spring of 1795, the decision was pronounced, near eight years after Hastings had been brought by the Sergeant-at-arms of the Commons to the bar of the Lords. On the last day of this great procedure the public curiosity, long suspended, seemed to be revived. Anxiety about the judgment there could be none; for it had been fully ascertained that there was a great majority for the defendant. Nevertheless many wished to see the pageant, and the Hall was as much crowded as on the first day. But those who, having been present on the first day, now bore a part in the proceedings of the last, were few; and most of those few were altered men.

As Hastings himself said, the arraignment had taken place before one generation, and the judgment was pronounced by another. The spectator could not look at the woolsack, or at the red benches of the Peers, or at the green benches of the Commons, without seeing something that reminded him of the instability of all human things, of the instability of power and fame and life, of the more lamentable instability of friendship. The great seal was borne before Lord Loughborough who, when the trial commenced, was a fierce opponent of Mr. Pitt's government, and who was now a member of that government, while Thurlow, who presided in the court when it first sat, estranged from all his old allies, sat scowling among the junior barons. Of about a hundred and sixty nobles who walked in the procession on the first day, sixty had been laid in their family vaults. Still more affecting must have been the sight of the manager's box. What had become of that fair fellowship, so closely bound together by public and private ties, so resplendent with every talent and accomplishment? It had been scattered by calamities more

bitter than the bitterness of death. The great chiefs were still living, and still in the full vigour of their genius. But their friendship was at an end. It had been violently and publicly dissolved, with tears and stormy reproaches. If those men, once so dear to each other, were now compelled to meet for the purpose of managing the impeachment, they met as strangers whom public business had brought together, and behaved to each other with cold and distant civility. Burke had in his vortex whirled away Windham. Fox had been followed by Sheridan and Grey.

Only twenty-nine Peers voted. Of these only six found Hastings guilty on the charges relating to Cheyte Sing and to the Begums. On other charges, the majority in his favour was still greater. On some, he was unanimously absolved. He was then called to the bar, was informed from the woolsack that the Lords had acquitted him, and was solemnly discharged. He bowed respectfully and retired.

We have said that the decision had been fully expected. It was also generally approved. At the commencement of the trial there had been a strong and indeed unreasonable feeling against Hastings. At the close of the trial there was a feeling equally strong and equally unreasonable in his favour. One cause of the change was, no doubt, what is commonly called the fickleness of the multitude, but what seems to us to be merely the general law of human nature. Both in individuals and in masses violent excitement is always followed by remission, and often by reaction. We are all inclined to depreciate whatever we have overpraised, and, on the other hand, to show undue indulgence where we have shown undue rigour. It was thus in the case of Hastings. The length of his trial, moreover, made him an object of compassion. It was thought, and not without reason, that, even if

he was guilty, he was still an ill-used man, and that an impeachment of eight years was more than a sufficient punishment. It was also felt that, though, in the ordinary course of criminal law, a defendant is not allowed to set off his good actions against his crimes, a great political cause should be tried on different principles, and that a man who had governed an empire during thirteen years might have done some very reprehensible things, and yet might be on the whole deserving of rewards and honours rather than of fine and inprisonment. The press, an instrument neglected by the prosecutors, was used by Hastings and his friends with great effect. Every ship, too, that arrived from Madras or Bengal, brought a cuddy full of his admirers. Every gentleman from India spoke of the late Governor-General as having deserved better, and having been treated worse, than any man living. The effect of this testimony unanimously given by all persons who knew the East, was naturally very great. Retired members of the Indian services, civil and military, were settled in all corners of the kingdom. Each of them was, of course, in his own little circle, regarded as an oracle on an Indian question ; and they were, with scarcely one exception, the zealous advocates of Hastings. It is to be added, that the numerous addresses to the late Governor-General, which his friends in Bengal obtained from the natives and transmitted to England, made a considerable impression. To these addresses we attach little or no importance. That Hastings was beloved by the people whom he governed is true ; but the eulogies of pundits, zemindars, Mahommedan doctors, do not prove it to be true. For an English collector or judge would have found it easy to induce any native who could write to sign a panegyric on the most odious ruler that ever was in India. It was said that at Benares, the very place at which the acts set

forth in the first article of impeachment had been committed, the natives had erected a temple to Hastings; and this story excited a strong sensation in England. Burke's observations on the apotheosis were admirable. He saw no reason for astonishment, he said, in the incident which had been represented as so striking. He knew something of the mythology of the Brahmins. He knew that as they worshipped some gods from love, so they worshipped others from fear. He knew that they erected shrines, not only to the benignant deities of light and plenty, but also to the fiends who preside over small-pox and murder. Nor did he at all dispute the claim of Mr. Hastings to be admitted into such a Pantheon. This reply has always struck us as one of the finest that ever was made in Parliament. It is a grave and forcible argument, decorated by the most brilliant wit and fancy.

Hastings was, however, safe. But in every thing except character, he would have been far better off if, when first impeached, he had at once pleaded guilty, and paid a fine of fifty thousand pounds. He was a ruined man. The legal expenses of his defence had been enormous. The expenses which did not appear in his attorney's bill were perhaps larger still. Great sums had been paid to Major Scott. Great sums had been laid out in bribing newspapers, rewarding pamphleteers, and circulating tracts. Burke, so early as 1790, declared in the House of Commons that twenty thousand pounds had been employed in corrupting the press. It is certain that no controversial weapon, from the gravest reasoning to the coarsest ribaldry, was left unemployed. Logan defended the accused governor with great ability in prose. For the lovers of verse, the speeches of the managers were burlesqued in Simpkin's letters. It is, we are afraid, indisputable that Hastings stooped so low as to court the aid of that

malignant and filthy baboon John Williams, who called himself Anthony Pasquin. It was necessary to subsidise such allies largely. The private hoards of Mrs. Hastings had disappeared. It is said that the banker to whom they had been entrusted had failed. Still if Hastings had practised strict economy, he would, after all his losses, have had a moderate competence; but in the management of his private affairs he was imprudent. The dearest wish of his heart had always been to regain Daylesford. At length, in the very year in which his trial commenced, the wish was accomplished; and the domain, alienated more than seventy years before, returned to the descendant of its old lords. But the manor house was a ruin; and the grounds round it had, during many years, been utterly neglected. Hastings proceeded to build, to plant, to form a sheet of water, to excavate a grotto; and, before he was dismissed from the bar of the House of Lords, he had expended more than forty thousand pounds in adorning his seat.

The general feeling both of the Directors and of the proprietors of the East India Company was that he had great claims on them, that his services to them had been eminent, and that his misfortunes had been the effect of his zeal for their interest. His friends in Leadenhall Street proposed to reimburse him for the costs of his trial, and to settle on him an annuity of five thousand pounds a year. But the consent of the Board of Control was necessary; and at the head of the Board of Control was Mr. Dundas, who had himself been a party to the impeachment, who had, on that account, been reviled with great bitterness by the adherents of Hastings, and who, therefore, was not in a very complying mood. He refused to consent to what the Directors suggested. The Directors remonstrated. A long controversy followed. Hastings, in the meantime, was reduced to such distress, that he

could hardly pay his weekly bills. At length a compromise was made. An annuity for life of four thousand pounds was settled on Hastings; and in order to enable him to meet pressing demands, he was to receive ten years' annuity in advance. The Company was also permitted to lend him fifty thousand pounds, to be repaid by instalments without interest. This relief, though given in the most absurd manner, was sufficient to enable the retired governor to live in comfort, and even in luxury, if he had been a skilful manager. But he was careless and profuse, and was more than once under the necessity of applying to the Company for assistance, which was liberally given.

He had security and affluence, but not the power and dignity which, when he landed from India, he had reason to expect. He had then looked forward to a coronet, a red riband, a seat at the Council Board, an office at Whitehall. He was then only fifty-two, and might hope for many years of bodily and mental vigour. The case was widely different when he left the bar of the Lords. He was now too old a man to turn his mind to a new class of studies and duties. He had no chance of receiving any mark of royal favour while Mr. Pitt remained in power; and, when Mr. Pitt retired, Hastings was approaching his seventieth year.

Once, and only once, after his acquittal, he interfered in politics; and that interference was not much to his honour. In 1804 he exerted himself strenuously to prevent Mr. Addington, against whom Fox and Pitt had combined, from resigning the Treasury. It is difficult to believe that a man so able and energetic as Hastings can have thought that, when Buonaparte was at Boulogne with a great army, the defence of our island could safely be entrusted to a ministry which did not contain a single person whom flattery could describe as a great statesman. It is also certain that, on the

important question which had raised Mr. Addington to power, and on which he differed from both Fox and Pitt, Hastings, as might have been expected, agreed with Fox and Pitt, and was decidedly opposed to Addington. Religious intolerance has never been the vice of the Indian service, and certainly was not the vice of Hastings. But Mr. Addington had treated him with marked favour. Fox had been a principal manager of the impeachment. To Pitt it was owing that there had been an impeachment; and Hastings, we fear, was on this occasion guided by personal considerations, rather than by a regard to the public interest.

The last twenty-four years of his life were chiefly passed at Daylesford. He amused himself with embellishing his grounds, riding fine Arab horses, fattening prize-cattle, and trying to rear Indian animals and vegetables in England. He sent for seeds of a very fine custard-apple, from the garden of what had once been his own villa, among the green hedge-rows of Allipore. He tried also to naturalise in Worcestershire the delicious leechee, almost the only fruit of Bengal which deserves to be regretted even amidst the plenty of Covent Garden. The Mogul emperors, in the time of their greatness, had in vain attempted to introduce into Hindostan the goat of the table-land of Thibet, whose down supplies the looms of Cashmere with the materials of the finest shawls. Hastings tried, with no better fortune, to rear a breed at Daylesford; nor does he seem to have succeeded better with the cattle of Bootan, whose tails are in high esteem as the best fans for brushing away the mosquitoes.

Literature divided his attention with his conservatories and his menagerie. He had always loved books, and they were now necessary to him. Though not a poet, in any high sense of the word, he wrote

neat and polished lines with great facility, and was fond of exercising this talent. Indeed, if we must speak out, he seems to have been more of a Trissotin than was to be expected from the powers of his mind and from the great part which he had played in life. We are assured in these Memoirs that the first thing which he did in the morning was to write a copy of verses. When the family and guests assembled, the poem made its appearance as regularly as the eggs and rolls; and Mr. Gleig requires us believe that, if from any accident Hastings came to to the breakfast-table without one of his charming performances in his hand, the omission was felt by all as a grievous disappointment. Tastes differ widely. For ourselves we must say that, however good the breakfasts at Daylesford may have been,—and we are assured that the tea was of the most aromatic flavour, and that neither tongue nor venison-pasty was wanting,—we should have thought the reckoning high if we had been forced to earn our repast by listening every day to a new madrigal or sonnet composed by our host. We are glad, however, that Mr. Gleig has preserved this little feature of character, though we think it by no means a beauty. It is good to be often reminded of the inconsistency of human nature, and to learn to look without wonder or disgust on the weaknesses which are found in the strongest minds. Dionysius in old times, Frederic in the last century, with capacity and vigour equal to the conduct of the greatest affairs, united all the little vanities and affectations of provincial blue-stockings. These great examples may console the admirers of Hastings for the affliction of seeing him reduced to the level of the Hayleys and Sewards.

When Hastings had passed many years in retirement, and had long outlived the common age of

men, he again became for a short time an object of general attention. In 1813 the charter of the East India Company was renewed; and much discussion about Indian affairs took place in Parliament. It was determined to examine witnesses at the bar of the Commons; and Hastings was ordered to attend. He had appeared at that bar once before. It was when he read his answer to the charges which Burke had laid on the table. Since that time twenty-seven years had elapsed; public feeling had undergone a complete change; the nation had now forgotten his faults, and remembered only his services. The reappearance, too, of a man who had been among the most distinguished of a generation that had passed away, who now belonged to history, and who seemed to have risen from the dead, could not but produce a solemn and pathetic effect. The Commons received him with acclamations, ordered a chair to be set for him, and, when he retired, rose and uncovered. There were, indeed, a few who did not sympathise with the general feeling. One or two of the managers of the impeachment were present. They sate in the same seats which they had occupied when they had been thanked for the services which they had rendered in Westminster Hall: for, by the courtesy of the House, a member who has been thanked in his place is considered as having a right always to occupy that place. These gentlemen were not disposed to admit that they had employed several of the best years of their lives in persecuting an innocent man. They accordingly kept their seats, and pulled their hats over their brows; but the exceptions only made the prevailing enthusiasm more remarkable. The Lords received the old man with similar tokens of respect. The University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws; and, in the Sheldonian Theatre,

the undergraduates welcomed him with tumultuous cheering.

These marks of public esteem were soon followed by marks of royal favour. Hastings was sworn of the Privy Council, and was admitted to a long private audience of the Prince Regent, who treated him very graciously. When the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia visited England, Hastings appeared in their train both at Oxford and in the Guildhall of London, and, though surrounded by a crowd of princes and great warriors, was every where received with marks of respect and admiration. He was presented by the Prince Regent both to Alexander and to Frederic William; and his Royal Highness went so far as to declare in public that honours far higher than a seat in the Privy Council were due, and would soon be paid, to the man who had saved the British dominions in Asia. Hastings now confidently expected a peerage; but, from some unexplained cause, he was again disappointed.

He lived about four years longer, in the enjoyment of good spirits, of faculties not impaired to any painful or degrading extent, and of health such as is rarely enjoyed by those who attain such an age. At length, on the twenty-second of August, 1818, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, he met death with the same tranquil and decorous fortitude which he had opposed to all the trials of his various and eventful life.

With all his faults,—and they were neither few nor small,—only one cemetery was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried, in the Great Abbey which has during many ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall, the dust of the

illustrious accused should have mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be. Yet the place of interment was not ill chosen. Behind the chancel of the parish church of Daylesford, in earth which already held the bones of many chiefs of the house of Hastings, was laid the coffin of the greatest man who has ever borne that ancient and widely extended name. On that very spot probably, fourscore years before, the little Warren, meanly clad and scantily fed, had played with the children of ploughmen. Even then his young mind had revolved plans which might be called romantic. Yet, however romantic, it is not likely that they had been so strange as the truth. Not only had the poor orphan retrieved the fallen fortunes of his line. Not only had he repurchased the old lands, and rebuilt the old dwelling. He had preserved and extended an empire. He had founded a polity. He had administered government and war with more than the capacity of Richelieu. He had patronised learning with the judicious liberality of Cosmo. He had been attacked by the most formidable combination of enemies that ever sought the destruction of a single victim; and over that combination, after a struggle of ten years, he had triumphed. He had at length gone down to his grave in the fulness of age, in peace after so many troubles, in honour after so much obloquy.

Those who look on his character without favour or malevolence will pronounce that, in the two great elements of all social virtue, in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others, he was deficient. His principles were somewhat lax. His heart was somewhat hard. But though we cannot with truth describe him either as a righteous or as a merciful ruler, we cannot regard without admiration the amplitude and fertility of his

intellect, his rare talents for command, for administration, and for controversy, his dauntless courage, his honourable poverty, his fervent zeal for the interests of the state, his noble equanimity, tried by both extremes of fortune, and never disturbed by either.

FREDERIC THE GREAT. (APRIL, 1842.)

Frederic the Great and his Times. Edited, with an Introduction by THOMAS CAMPBELL, Esq. 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1842.

THIS work, which has the high honour of being introduced to the world by the author of Lochiel and Hohenlinden, is not wholly unworthy of so distinguished a *chaperon.* It professes, indeed, to be no more than a compilation; but it is an exceedingly amusing compilation, and we shall be glad to have more of it. The narrative comes down at present only to the commencement of the Seven Years' War, and therefore does not comprise the most interesting portion of Frederic's reign.

It may not be unacceptable to our readers that we should take this opportunity of presenting them with a slight sketch of the life of the greatest king that has, in modern times, succeeded by right of birth to a throne. It may, we fear, be impossible to compress so long and eventful a story within the limits which we must prescribe to ourselves. Should we be compelled to break off, we may perhaps, when the continuation of this work appears, return to the subject.

The Prussian monarchy, the youngest of the great European states, but in population and revenue the fifth among them, and in art, science, and civilisation entitled to the third, if not to the second place, sprang from a humble origin. About the beginning of the

fifteenth century, the marquisate of Brandenburg was bestowed by the Emperor Sigismund on the noble family of Hohenzollern. In the sixteenth century that family embraced the Lutheran doctrines. It obtained from the King of Poland, early in the seventeenth century, the investiture of the duchy of Prussia. Even after this accession of territory, the chiefs of the house of Hohenzollern hardly ranked with the Electors of Saxony and Bavaria. The soil of Brandenburg was for the most part sterile. Even round Berlin, the capital of the province, and round Potsdam, the favourite residence of the Margraves, the country was a desert. In some places, the deep sand could with difficulty be forced by assiduous tillage to yield thin crops of rye and oats. In other places, the ancient forests, from which the conquerors of the Roman empire had descended on the Danube, remained untouched by the hand of man. Where the soil was rich it was generally marshy, and its insalubrity repelled the cultivators whom its fertility attracted. Frederic William, called the Great Elector, was the prince to whose policy his successors have agreed to ascribe their greatness. He acquired by the peace of Westphalia several valuable possessions, and among them the rich city and district of Magdeburg; and he left to his son Frederic a principality as considerable as any which was not called a kingdom.

Frederic aspired to the style of royalty. Ostentatious and profuse, negligent of his true interests and of his high duties, insatiably eager for frivolous distinctions, he added nothing to the real weight of the state which he governed: perhaps he transmitted his inheritance to his children impaired rather than augmented in value; but he succeeded in gaining the great object of his life, the title of King. In the year 1700 he assumed this new dignity. He had on that

occasion to undergo all the mortifications which fall to the lot of ambitious upstarts. Compared with the other crowned heads of Europe, he made a figure resembling that which a Nabob or a Commissary, who had bought a title, would make in the company of Peers whose ancestors had been attainted for treason against the Plantagenets. The envy of the class which Frederic quitted, and the civil scorn of the class into which he intruded himself, were marked in very significant ways. The Elector of Saxony at first refused to acknowledge the new Majesty. Lewis the Fourteenth looked down on his brother King with an air not unlike that with which the Count in Molière's play regards Monsieur Jourdain, just fresh from the mummery of being made a gentleman. Austria exacted large sacrifices in return for her recognition, and at last gave it ungraciously.

Frederic was succeeded by his son, Frederic William, a prince who must be allowed to have possessed some talents for administration, but whose character was disfigured by odious vices, and whose eccentricities were such as had never before been seen out of a madhouse. He was exact and diligent in the transacting of business; and he was the first who formed the design of obtaining for Prussia a place among the European powers, altogether out of proportion to her extent and population, by means of a strong military organization. Strict economy enabled him to keep up a peace establishment of sixty thousand troops. These troops were disciplined in such a manner, that placed beside them, the household regiments of Versailles and St. James's would have appeared an awkward squad. The master of such a force could not but be regarded by all his neighbours as a formidable enemy and a valuable ally.

But the mind of Frederic William was so ill regulated, that all his inclinations became passions,

and all his passions partook of the character of moral and intellectual disease. His parsimony degenerated into sordid avarice. His taste for military pomp and order became a mania, like that of a Dutch burgomaster for tulips, or that of a member of the Roxburghe Club for Caxtons. While the envoys of the Court of Berlin were in a state of such squalid poverty as moved the laughter of foreign capitals, while the food placed before the princes and princesses of the blood-royal of Prussia was too scanty to appease hunger, and so bad that even hunger loathed it, no price was thought too extravagant for tall recruits. The ambition of the King was to form a brigade of giants, and every country was ransacked by his agents for men above the ordinary stature. These researches were not confined to Europe. No head that towered above the crowd in the bazaars of Aleppo, of Cairo, or of Surat, could escape the crimps of Frederic William. One Irishman more than seven feet high, who was picked up in London by the Prussian ambassador, received a bounty of near thirteen hundred pounds sterling, very much more than the ambassador's salary. This extravagance was the more absurd, because a stout youth of five feet eight, who might have been procured for a few dollars, would in all probability have been a much more valuable soldier. But to Frederic William, this huge Irishman was what a brass Otho, or a Vinegar Bible, is to a collector of a different kind.

It is remarkable, that though the main end of Frederic William's administration was to have a great military force, though his reign forms an important epoch in the history of military discipline, and though his dominant passion was the love of military display, he was yet one of the most pacific of princes. We are afraid that his aversion to war was not the effect of humanity, but was merely one of his thousand

whims. His feeling about his troops seems to have resembled a miser's feeling about his money. He loved to collect them, to count them, to see them increase; but he could not find it in his heart to break in upon the precious hoard. He looked forward to some future time when his Patagonian battalions were to drive hostile infantry before them like sheep: but this future time was always receding; and it is probable that, if his life had been prolonged thirty years, his superb army would never have seen any harder service than a sham fight in the fields near Berlin. But the great military means which he had collected were destined to be employed by a spirit far more daring and inventive than his own.

Frederic, surnamed the Great, son of Frederic William, was born in January 1712. It may safely be pronounced that he had received from nature a strong and sharp understanding, and a rare firmness of temper and intensity of will. As to the other parts of his character, it is difficult to say whether they are to be ascribed to nature, or to the strange training which he underwent. The history of his boyhood is painfully interesting. Oliver Twist in the parish workhouse, Smike at Dotheboys Hall, were petted children when compared with this wretched heir apparent of a crown. The nature of Frederic William was hard and bad, and the habit of exercising arbitrary power had made him frightfully savage. His rage constantly vented itself to right and left in curses and blows. When his Majesty took a walk, every human being fled before him, as if a tiger had broken loose from a menagerie. If he met a lady in the street, he gave her a kick, and told her to go home and mind her brats. If he saw a clergyman staring at the soldiers, he admonished the reverend gentleman to betake himself to study and prayer, and enforced this pious advice by a sound caning, admini-

stered on the spot. But it was in his own house that he was most unreasonable and ferocious. His palace was hell, and he the most execrable of fiends, a cross between Moloch and Puck. His son Frederic and his daughter Wilhelmina, afterwards Margravine of Bareuth, were in an especial manner objects of his aversion. His own mind was uncultivated. He despised literature. He hated infidels, papists, and metaphysicians, and did not very well understand in what they differed from each other. The business of life, according to him, was to drill and to be drilled. The recreations suited to a prince, were to sit in a cloud of tobacco smoke, to sip Swedish beer between the puffs of the pipe, to play backgammon for three halfpence a rubber, to kill wild hogs, and to shoot partridges by the thousand. The Prince Royal showed little inclination either for the serious employments or for the amusements of his father. He shirked the duties of the parade: he detested the fume of tobacco: he had no taste either for backgammon or for field sports. He had an exquisite ear, and performed skilfully on the flute. His earliest instructors had been French refugees, and they had awakened in him a strong passion for French literature and French society. Frederic William regarded these tastes as effeminate and contemptible, and, by abuse and persecution, made them still stronger. Things became worse when the Prince Royal attained that time of life at which the great revolution in the human mind and body takes place. He was guilty of some youthful indiscretions, which no good and wise parent would regard with severity. At a later period he was accused, truly or falsely, of vices from which history averts her eyes, and which even Satire blushes to name, vices such that, to borrow the energetic language of Lord Keeper Coventry, "the depraved nature of man, which of itself carrieth man to

all other sin, abhorreth them." But the offences of his youth were not characterized by any peculiar turpitude. They excited, however, transports of rage in the King, who hated all faults except those to which he was himself inclined, and who conceived that he made ample atonement to Heaven for his brutality, by holding the softer passions in detestation. The Prince Royal, too, was not one of those who are content to take their religion on trust. He asked puzzling questions, and brought forward arguments which seemed to savour of something different from pure Lutheranism. The King suspected that his son was inclined to be a heretic of some sort or other, whether Calvinist or Atheist his Majesty did not very well know. The ordinary malignity of Frederic William was bad enough. He now thought malignity a part of his duty as a Christian man, and all the conscience that he had stimulated his hatred. The flute was broken: the French books were sent out of the palace: the Prince was kicked and cudgelled, and pulled by the hair. At dinner the plates were hurled at his head: sometimes he was restricted to bread and water: sometimes he was forced to swallow food so nauseous that he could not keep it on his stomach. Once his father knocked him down, dragged him along the floor to a window, and was with difficulty prevented from strangling him with the cord of the curtain. The Queen, for the crime of not wishing to see her son murdered, was subjected to the grossest indignities. The Princess Wilhelmina, who took her brother's part, was treated almost as ill as Mrs. Brownrigg's apprentices. Driven to despair, the unhappy youth tried to run away. Then the fury of the old tyrant rose to madness. The Prince was an officer in the army: his flight was therefore desertion; and in the moral code of Frederic William, desertion was the highest of all crimes. "Desertion," says this

royal theologian, in one of his half crazy letters, "is from hell. It is a work of the children of the Devil No child of God could possibly be guilty of it." An accomplice of the Prince, in spite of the recommendation of a court martial, was mercilessly put to death. It seemed probable that the Prince himself would suffer the same fate. It was with difficulty that the intercession of the States of Holland, of the Kings of Sweden and Poland, and of the Emperor of Germany, saved the House of Brandenburg from the stain of an unnatural murder. After months of cruel suspense, Frederic learned that his life would be spared. He remained, however, long a prisoner; but he was not on that account to be pitied. He found in his gaolers a tenderness which he had never found in his father; his table was not sumptuous, but he had wholesome food in sufficient quantity to appease hunger: he could read the Henriade without being kicked, and could play on his flute without having it broken over his head.

When his confinement terminated he was a man. He had nearly completed his twenty-first year, and could scarcely be kept much longer under the restraints which had made his boyhood miserable. Suffering had matured his understanding, while it had hardened his heart and soured his temper. He had learnt self-command and dissimulation: he affected to conform to some of his father's views, and submissively accepted a wife, who was a wife only in name, from his father's hand. He also served with credit, though without any opportunity of acquiring brilliant distinction, under the command of Prince Eugene, during a campaign marked by no extraordinary events. He was now permitted to keep a separate establishment, and was therefore able to indulge with caution his own tastes. Partly in order to conciliate the king, and partly, no doubt, from inclination, he gave up a

portion of his time to military and political business, and thus gradually acquired such an aptitude for affairs as his most intimate associates were not aware that he possessed.

His favourite abode was at Rheinsberg, near the frontier which separates the Prussian dominions from the Duchy of Mecklenburg. Rheinsberg is a fertile and smiling spot, in the midst of the sandy waste of the Marquisate. The mansion, surrounded by woods of oak and beech, looks out upon a spacious lake. There Frederic amused himself by laying out gardens in regular alleys and intricate mazes, by building obelisks, temples, and conservatories, and by collecting rare fruits and flowers. His retirement was enlivened by a few companions, among whom he seems to have preferred those who, by birth or extraction, were French. With these intimates he dined and supped well, drank freely, and amused himself sometimes with concerts, and sometimes with holding chapters of a fraternity which he called the Order of Bayard; but literature was his chief resource.

His education had been entirely French. The long ascendency which Lewis the Fourteenth had enjoyed, and the eminent merit of the tragic and comic dramatists, of the satirists, and of the preachers who had flourished under that magnificent prince, had made the French language predominant in Europe. Even in countries which had a national literature, and which could boast of names greater than those of Racine, of Molière, and of Massillon, in the country of Dante, in the country of Cervantes, in the country of Shakspeare and Milton, the intellectual fashions of Paris had been to a great extent adopted. Germany had not yet produced a single masterpiece of poetry or eloquence. In Germany, therefore, the French taste reigned without rival and without limit. Every youth

of rank was taught to speak and write French. That he should speak and write his own tongue with politeness or even with accuracy and facility, was regarded as comparatively an unimportant object. Even Frederic William, with all his rugged Saxon prejudices, thought it necessary that his children should know French, and quite unnecessary that they should be well versed in German. The Latin was positively interdicted. "My son," his Majesty wrote, "shall not learn Latin; and, more than that, I will not suffer anybody even to mention such a thing to me." One of the preceptors ventured to read the Golden Bull in the original with the Prince Royal. Frederic William entered the room, and broke out in his usual kingly style.

"Rascal, what are you at there?"

"Please your Majesty," answered the preceptor, "I was explaining the Golden Bull to his Royal Highness."

"I'll Golden Bull you, you rascal!" roared the Majesty of Prussia. Up went the King's cane; away ran the terrified instructor; and Frederic's classical studies ended for ever. He now and then affected to quote Latin sentences, and produced such exquisitely Ciceronian phrases as these:—Stante pede morire,"—"De gustibus non est disputandus,"—"Tot verbas tot spondera." Of Italian he had not enough to read a page of Metastasio with ease; and of the Spanish and English, he did not, as far as we are aware, understand a single word.

As the highest human compositions to which he had access were those of the French writers, it is not strange that his admiration for those writers should have been unbounded. His ambitious and eager temper early prompted him to imitate what he admired. The wish, perhaps, dearest to his heart was that he might rank among the masters of French

rhetoric and poetry. He wrote prose and verse as indefatigably as if he had been a starving hack of Cave or Osborn; but Nature, which had bestowed on him, in a large measure, the talents of a captain and of an administrator, had withheld from him those higher and rarer gifts, without which industry labours in vain to produce immortal eloquence and song. And, indeed, had he been blessed with more imagination, wit, and fertility of thought, than he appears to have had, he would still have been subject to one great disadvantage, which would, in all probability, have for ever prevented him from taking a high place among men of letters. He had not the full command of any language. There was no machine of thought which he could employ with perfect ease, confidence, and freedom. He had German enough to scold his servants, or to give the word of command to his grenadiers; but his grammar and pronunciation were extremely bad. He found it difficult to make out the meaning even of the simplest German poetry. On one occasion a version of Racine's Iphigénie was read to him. He held the French original in his hand; but was forced to own that even with such help, he could not understand the translation. Yet though he had neglected his mother tongue in order to bestow all his attention on French, his French was, after all, the French of a foreigner. It was necessary for him to have always at his beck some men of letters from Paris to point out the solecisms and false rhymes of which, to the last, he was frequently guilty. Even had he possessed the poetic faculty, of which, as far as we can judge, he was utterly destitute, the want of a language would have prevented him from being a great poet. No noble work of imagination, as far as we recollect, was ever composed by any man, except in a dialect which he had learned without remembering how or when, and which he had

spoken with perfect ease before he had ever analysed its structure. Romans of great abilities wrote Greek verses; but how many of those verses have deserved to live? Many men of eminent genius have, in modern times, written Latin poems; but, as far as we are aware, none of those poems, not even Milton's, can be ranked in the first class of art, or even very high in the second. It is not strange, therefore, that, in the French verses of Frederic, we can find nothing beyond the reach of any man of good parts and industry, nothing above the level of Newdigate and Seatonian poetry. His best pieces may perhaps rank with the worst in Dodsley's collection. In history, he succeeded better. We do not indeed find in any part of his voluminous Memoirs, either deep reflection or vivid painting. But the narrative is distinguished by clearness, conciseness, good sense, and a certain air of truth and simplicity, which is singularly graceful in a man who, having done great things, sits down to relate them. On the whole, however, none of his writings are so agreeable to us as his Letters, particularly those which are written with earnestness, and are not embroidered with verses.

It is not strange that a young man devoted to literature, and acquainted only with the literature of France, should have looked with profound veneration on the genius of Voltaire. "A man who has never seen the sun," says Calderon, in one of his charming comedies, "cannot be blamed for thinking that no glory can exceed that of the moon. A man who has seen neither moon nor sun, cannot be blamed for talking of the unrivalled brightness of the morning star." Had Frederic been able to read Homer and Milton, or even Virgil and Tasso, his admiration of the Henriade would prove that he was utterly destitute of the power of discerning what is excellent in art. Had he been familiar with Sophocles or Shakspeare,

we should have expected him to appreciate Zaire more justly. Had he been able to study Thucydides and Tacitus in the original Greek and Latin, he would have known that there were heights in the eloquence of history far beyond the reach of the author of the Life of Charles the Twelfth. But the finest heroic poem, several of the most powerful tragedies, and the most brilliant and picturesque historical work that Frederic had ever read, were Voltaire's. Such high and various excellence moved the young Prince almost to adoration. The opinions of Voltaire on religious and philosophical questions had not yet been fully exhibited to the public. At a later period, when an exile from his country, and at open war with the Church, he spoke out. But when Frederic was at Rheinsberg, Voltaire was still a courtier; and, though he could not always curb his petulant wit, he had as yet published nothing that could exclude him from Versailles, and little that a divine of the mild and generous school of Grotius and Tillotson might not read with pleasure. In the Henriade, in Zaire, and in Alzire, Christian piety is exhibited in the most amiable form; and, some years after the period of which we are writing, a Pope condescended to accept the dedication of Mahomet. The real sentiments of the poet, however, might be clearly perceived by a keen eye through the decent disguise with which he veiled them, and could not escape the sagacity of Frederic, who held similar opinions, and had been accustomed to practise similar dissimulation.

The Prince wrote to his idol in the style of a worshipper; and Voltaire replied with exquisite grace and address. A correspondence followed, which may be studied with advantage by those who wish to become proficients in the ignoble art of flattery. No man ever paid compliments better than Voltaire. His sweetest confectionery had always a

delicate, yet stimulating flavour, which was delightful to palates wearied by the coarse preparations of inferior artists. It was only from his hand that so much sugar could be swallowed without making the swallower sick. Copies of verses, writing desks, trinkets of amber, were exchanged between the friends. Frederic confided his writings to Voltaire; and Voltaire applauded, as if Frederic had been Racine and Bossuet in one. One of his Royal Highness's performances was a refutation of Machiavelli. Voltaire undertook to convey it to the press. It was entitled the Anti-Machiavel, and was an edifying homily against rapacity, perfidy, arbitrary government, unjust war, in short, against almost every thing for which its author is now remembered among men.

The old King uttered now and then a ferocious growl at the diversions of Rheinsberg. But his health was broken; his end was approaching; and his vigour was impaired. He had only one pleasure left, that of seeing tall soldiers. He could always be propitiated by a present of a grenadier of six feet four or six feet five; and such presents were from time to time judiciously offered by his son.

Early in the year 1740, Frederic William met death with a firmness and dignity worthy of a better and wiser man; and Frederic, who had just completed his twenty-eighth year, became King of Prussia. His character was little understood. That he had good abilities, indeed, no person who had talked with him, or corresponded with him, could doubt. But the easy Epicurean life which he had led, his love of good cookery and good wine, of music, of conversation, of light literature, led many to regard him as a sensual and intellectual voluptuary. His habit of canting about moderation, peace, liberty, and the happiness which a good mind

derives from the happiness of others, had imposed on some who should have known better. Those who thought best of him, expected a Telemachus after Fénelon's pattern. Others predicted the approach of a Medicean age, an age propitious to learning and art, and not unpropitious to pleasure. Nobody had the least suspicion that a tyrant of extraordinary military and political talents, of industry more extraordinary still, without fear, without faith, and without mercy, had ascended the throne.

The disappointment of Falstaff at his old boon-companion's coronation was not more bitter than that which awaited some of the inmates of Rheinsberg. They had long looked forward to the accession of their patron, as to the event from which their own prosperity and greatness was to date. They had at last reached the promised land, the land which they had figured to themselves as flowing with milk and honey; and they found it a desert. "No more of these fooleries," was the short, sharp admonition given by Frederic to one of them. It soon became plain that, in the most important points, the new sovereign bore a strong family likeness to his predecessor. There was indeed a wide difference between the father and the son as respected extent and vigour of intellect, speculative opinions, amusements, studies, outward demeanour. But the groundwork of the character was the same in both. To both were common the love of order, the love of business, the military taste, the parsimony, the imperious spirit, the temper irritable even to ferocity, the pleasure in the pain and humiliation of others. But these propensities had in Frederic William partaken of the general unsoundness of his mind, and wore a very different aspect when found in company with the strong and cultivated understanding of his successor. Thus, for example, Frederic was as anxious as any

prince could be about the efficiency of his army. But this anxiety never degenerated into a monomania, like that which led his father to pay fancy prices for giants. Frederic was as thrifty about money as any prince or any private man ought to be. But he did not conceive, like his father, that it was worth while to eat unwholesome cabbages for the purpose of saving four or five rixdollars in the year. Frederic was, we fear, as malevolent as his father; but Frederic's wit enabled him often to show his malevolence in ways more decent than those to which his father resorted, and to inflict misery and degradation by a taunt instead of a blow. Frederic, it is true, by no means relinquished his hereditary privilege of kicking and cudgelling. His practice, however, as to that matter, differed in some important respects from his father's. To Frederic William the mere circumstance that any persons whatever, men, women, or children, Prussians or foreigners, were within reach of his toes and of his cane, appeared to be a sufficient reason for proceeding to belabour them. Frederic required provocation as well as vicinity; nor was he ever known to inflict this paternal species of correction on any but his born subjects; though on one occasion M. Thiébault had reason, during a few seconds, to anticipate the high honour of being an exception to this general rule.

The character of Frederic was still very imperfectly understood either by his subjects or by his neighbours, when events occurred which exhibited it in a strong light. A few months after his accession died Charles VI., Emperor of Germany, the last descendant, in the male line, of the house of Austria.

Charles left no son, and had, long before his death, relinquished all hopes of male issue. During the latter part of his life, his principal object had been to secure to his descendants in the female line the

many crowns of the house of Hapsburg. With this view he had promulgated a new law of succession, widely celebrated throughout Europe under the name of the Pragmatic Sanction. By virtue of this law, his daughter, the Archduchess Maria Theresa, wife of Francis of Loraine, succeeded to the dominions of her ancestors.

No sovereign has ever taken possession of a throne by a clearer title. All the politics of the Austrian cabinet had, during twenty years, been directed to one single end, the settlement of the succession. From every person whose rights could be considered as injuriously affected, renunciations in the most solemn form had been obtained. The new law had been ratified by the Estates of all the kingdoms and principalities which made up the great Austrian monarchy. England, France, Spain, Russia, Poland, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, the Germanic body, had bound themselves by treaty to maintain the Pragmatic Sanction. That instrument was placed under the protection of the public faith of the whole civilized world.

Even if no positive stipulations on this subject had existed, the arrangement was one which no good man would have been willing to disturb. It was a peaceable arrangement. It was an arrangement acceptable to the great population whose happiness was chiefly concerned. It was an arrangement which made no change in the distribution of power among the states of Christendom. It was an arrangement which could be set aside only by means of a general war; and, if it were set aside, the effect would be, that the equilibrium of Europe would be deranged, that the loyal and patriotic feelings of millions would be cruelly outraged, and that great provinces which had been united for centuries would be torn from each other by main force.

The sovereigns of Europe were, therefore, bound by every obligation which those who are entrusted with power over their fellow-creatures ought to hold most sacred, to respect and defend the rights of the Archduchess. Her situation and her personal qualities were such as might be expected to move the mind of any generous man to pity, admiration, and chivalrous tenderness. She was in her twenty-fourth year. Her form was majestic, her features beautiful, her countenance sweet and animated, her voice musical, her deportment gracious and dignified. In all domestic relations she was without reproach. She was married to a husband whom she loved, and was on the point of giving birth to a child, when death deprived her of her father. The loss of a parent and the new cares of empire, were too much for her in the delicate state of her health. Her spirits were depressed, and her cheek lost its bloom. Yet it seemed that she had little cause for anxiety. It seemed that justice, humanity, and the faith of treaties would have their due weight, and that the settlement so solemnly guaranteed would be quietly carried into effect. England, Russia, Poland, and Holland, declared in form their intention to adhere to their engagements. The French ministers made a verbal declaration to the same effect. But from no quarter did the young Queen of Hungary receive stronger assurances of friendship and support than from the King of Prussia.

Yet the King of Prussia, the Anti-Machiavel, had already fully determined to commit the great crime of violating his plighted faith, of robbing the ally whom he was bound to defend, and of plunging all Europe into a long, bloody, and desolating war; and all this for no end whatever, except that he might extend his dominions, and see his name in the gazettes. He determined to assemble a great army with speed and secrecy, to invade Silesia before

Maria Theresa should be apprized of his design, and to add that rich province to his kingdom.

We will not condescend to refute at length the pleas which the compiler of the Memoirs before us has copied from Doctor Preuss. They amount to this, that the House of Brandenburg had some ancient pretensions to Silesia, and had in the previous century been compelled, by hard usage on the part of the Court of Vienna, to waive those pretensions. It is certain that, whoever might originally have been in the right, Prussia had submitted. Prince after prince of the House of Brandenburg had acquiesced in the existing arrangement. Nay, the Court of Berlin had recently been allied with that of Vienna, and had guaranteed the integrity of the Austrian states. Is it not perfectly clear that, if antiquated claims are to be set up against recent treaties and long possession, the world can never be at peace for a day? The laws of all nations have wisely established a time of limitation, after which titles, however illegitimate in their origin, cannot be questioned. It is felt by every body, that to eject a person from his estate on the ground of some injustice committed in the time of the Tudors would produce all the evils which result from arbitrary confiscation, and would make all property insecure. It concerns the commonwealth—so runs the legal maxim—that there be an end of litigation. And surely this maxim is at least equally applicable to the great commonwealth of states; for in that commonwealth litigation means the devastation of provinces, the suspension of trade and industry, sieges like those of Badajoz and St. Sebastian, pitched fields like those of Eylau and Borodino. We hold that the transfer of Norway from Denmark to Sweden was an unjustifiable proceeding; but would the King of Denmark be therefore justified in landing, without any new provocation,

in Norway, and commencing military operations, there? The King of Holland thinks, no doubt, that he was unjustly deprived of the Belgian provinces. Grant that it were so. Would he, therefore, be justified in marching with an army on Brussels? The case against Frederic was still stronger, inasmuch as the injustice of which he complained had been committed more than a century before. Nor must it be forgotten that he owed the highest personal obligations to the House of Austria. It may be doubted whether his life had not been preserved by the intercession of the prince whose daughter he was about to plunder.

To do the King justice, he pretended to no more virtue than he had. In manifestoes he might, for form's sake, insert some idle stories about his antiquated claim on Silesia; but in his conversations and Memoirs he took a very different tone. His own words are: "Ambition, interest, the desire of making people talk about me, carried the day; and I decided for war."

Having resolved on his course, he acted with ability and vigour. It was impossible wholly to conceal his preparations; for throughout the Prussian territories regiments, guns, and baggage were in motion. The Austrian envoy at Berlin apprized his court of these facts, and expressed a suspicion of Frederic's designs; but the ministers of Maria Theresa refused to give credit to so black an imputation on a young prince who was known chiefly by his high professions of integrity and philanthropy. "We will not," they wrote, "we cannot, believe it."

In the meantime the Prussian forces had been assembled. Without any declaration of war, without any demand for reparation, in the very act of pouring forth compliments and assurances of good will, Frederic commenced hostilities. Many thousands of

his troops were actually in Silesia before the Queen of Hungary knew that he had set up any claim to any part of her territories. At length he sent her a message which could be regarded only as an insult. If she would but let him have Silesia, he would, he said, stand by her against any power which should try to deprive her of her other dominions; as if he was not already bound to stand by her, or as if his new promise could be of more value than the old one.

It was the depth of winter. The cold was severe, and the roads heavy with mire. But the Prussians pressed on. Resistance was impossible. The Austrian army was then neither numerous nor efficient. The small portion of that army which lay in Silesia was unprepared for hostilities. Glogau was blockaded; Breslau opened its gates; Ohlau was evacuated. A few scattered garrisons still held out; but the whole open country was subjugated: no enemy ventured to encounter the King in the field; and, before the end of January 1741, he returned to receive the congratulations of his subjects at Berlin.

Had the Silesian question been merely a question between Frederic and Maria Theresa, it would be impossible to acquit the Prussian King of gross perfidy. But when we consider the effects which his policy produced, and could not fail to produce, on the whole community of civilized nations, we are compelled to pronounce a condemnation still more severe. Till he began the war, it seemed possible, even probable, that the peace of the world would be preserved. The plunder of the great Austrian heritage was indeed a strong temptation; and in more than one cabinet ambitious schemes were already meditated. But the treaties by which the Pragmatic Sanction had been guaranteed were express and recent. To throw all Europe into confusion for a purpose clearly unjust, was no light matter. England was true to her en-

gagements. The voice of Fleury had always been for peace. He had a conscience. He was now in extreme old age, and was unwilling, after a life which, when his situation was considered, must be pronounced singularly pure, to carry the fresh stain of a great crime before the tribunal of his God. Even the vain and unprincipled Belle-Isle, whose whole life was one wild day-dream of conquest and spoliation, felt that France, bound as she was by solemn stipulations, could not, without disgrace, make a direct attack on the Austrian dominions. Charles, Elector of Bavaria, pretended that he had a right to a large part of the inheritance which the Pragmatic Sanction gave to the Queen of Hungary; but he was not sufficiently powerful to move without support. It might, therefore, not unreasonably be expected that, after a short period of restlessness, all the potentates of Christendom would acquiesce in the arrangements made by the late Emperor. But the selfish rapacity of the King of Prussia gave the signal to his neighbours. His example quieted their sense of shame. His success led them to underrate the difficulty of dismembering the Austrian monarchy. The whole world sprang to arms. On the head of Frederic is all the blood which was shed in a war which raged during many years and in every quarter of the globe, the blood of the column of Fontenoy, the blood of the mountaineers who were slaughtered at Culloden. The evils produced by his wickedness were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown; and, in order that he might rob a neighbour whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the Great Lakes of North America.

Silesia had been occupied without a battle; but the Austrian troops were advancing to the relief of the fortresses which still held out. In the spring

Frederic rejoined his army. He had seen little of war, and had never commanded any great body of men in the field. It is not, therefore, strange that his first military operations showed little of that skill which, at a later period, was the admiration of Europe. What connoisseurs say of some pictures painted by Raphael in his youth, may be said of this campaign. It was in Frederic's early bad manner. Fortunately for him, the generals to whom he was opposed were men of small capacity. The discipline of his own troops, particularly of the infantry, was unequalled in that age; and some able and experienced officers were at hand to assist him with their advice. Of these, the most distinguished was Field-Marshal Schwerin, a brave adventurer of Pomeranian extraction, who had served half the governments in Europe, had borne the commissions of the States General of Holland, and of the Duke of Mecklenburg, had fought under Marlborough at Blenheim, and had been with Charles the Twelfth at Bender.

Frederic's first battle was fought at Molwitz; and never did the career of a great commander open in a more inauspicious manner. His army was victorious. Not only, however, did he not establish his title to the character of an able general; but he was so unfortunate as to make it doubtful whether he possessed the vulgar courage of a soldier. The cavalry, which he commanded in person, was put to flight. Unaccustomed to the tumult and carnage of a field of battle, he lost his self-possession, and listened too readily to those who urged him to save himself. His English grey carried him many miles from the field, while Schwerin, though wounded in two places, manfully upheld the day. The skill of the old Field-Marshal and the steadiness of the Prussian battalions prevailed; and the

Austrian army was driven from the field with the loss of eight thousand men.

The news was carried late at night to a mill in which the King had taken shelter. It gave him a bitter pang. He was successful; but he owed his success to dispositions which others had made, and to the valour of men who had fought while he was flying. So unpromising was the first appearance of the greatest warrior of that age.

The battle of Molwitz was the signal for a general explosion throughout Europe. Bavaria took up arms. France, not yet declaring herself a principal in the war, took part in it as an ally of Bavaria. The two great statesmen to whom mankind had owed many years of tranquillity, disappeared about this time from the scene, but not till they had both been guilty of the weakness of sacrificing their sense of justice and their love of peace to the vain hope of preserving their power. Fleury, sinking under age and infirmity, was borne down by the impetuosity of Belle-Isle. Walpole retired from the service of his ungrateful country to his woods and paintings at Houghton; and his power devolved on the daring and eccentric Carteret. As were the ministers, so were the nations. Thirty years during which Europe had, with few interruptions, enjoyed repose, had prepared the public mind for great military efforts. A new generation had grown up, which could not remember the siege of Turin or the slaughter of Malplaquet; which knew war by nothing but its trophies; and which, while it looked with pride on the tapestries at Blenheim, or the statue in the Place of Victories, little thought by what privations, by what waste of private fortunes, by how many bitter tears, conquests must be purchased.

For a time fortune seemed adverse to the Queen of Hungary. Frederic invaded Moravia. The French

and Bavarians penetrated into Bohemia, and were there joined by the Saxons. Prague was taken. The Elector of Bavaria was raised by the suffrages of his colleagues to the Imperial throne, a throne which the practice of centuries had almost entitled the House of Austria to regard as a hereditary possession.

Yet was the spirit of the haughty daughter of the Cæsars unbroken. Hungary was still hers by an unquestionable title; and although her ancestors had found Hungary the most mutinous of all their kingdoms, she resolved to trust herself to the fidelity of a people, rude indeed, turbulent, and impatient of oppression, but brave, generous, and simple-hearted. In the midst of distress and peril she had given birth to a son, afterwards the Emperor Joseph the Second. Scarcely had she risen from her couch, when she hastened to Presburg. There, in the sight of an innumerable multitude, she was crowned with the crown and robed with the robe of St. Stephen. No spectator could restrain his tears when the beautiful young mother, still weak from child-bearing, rode, after the fashion of her fathers, up the Mount of Defiance, unsheathed the ancient sword of state, shook it towards north and south, east and west, and, with a glow on her pale face, challenged the four corners of the world to dispute her rights and those of her boy. At the first sitting of the Diet she appeared clad in deep mourning for her father, and in pathetic and dignified words implored her people to support her just cause. Magnates and deputies sprang up, half drew their sabres, and with eager voices vowed to stand by her with their lives and fortunes. Till then, her firmness had never once forsaken her before the public eye; but at that shout she sank down upon her throne, and wept aloud. Still more touching was the sight when, a few days later, she came again before the Estates of her realm, and held up

before them the little Archduke in her arms. Then it was that the enthusiasm of Hungary broke forth into that war-cry which soon resounded throughout Europe, "Let us die for our King, Maria Theresa."

In the meantime, Frederic was meditating a change of policy. He had no wish to raise France to supreme power on the Continent, at the expense of the House of Hapsburg. His first object was to rob the Queen of Hungary. His second object was that, if possible, nobody should rob her but himself. He had entered into engagements with the powers leagued against Austria; but these engagements were in his estimation of no more force than the guarantee formerly given to the Pragmatic Sanction. His plan now was to secure his share of the plunder by betraying his accomplices. Maria Theresa was little inclined to listen to any such compromise; but the English government represented to her so strongly the necessity of buying off Frederic, that she agreed to negotiate. The negotiation would not, however, have ended in a treaty, had not the arms of Frederic been crowned with a second victory. Prince Charles of Loraine, brother-in-law to Maria Theresa, a bold and active, though unfortunate general, gave battle to the Prussians at Chotusitz, and was defeated. The King was still only a learner of the military art. He acknowledged, at a later period, that his success on this occasion was to be attributed, not at all to his own generalship, but solely to the valour and steadiness of his troops. He completely effaced, however, by his personal courage and energy, the stain which Molwitz had left on his reputation.

A peace, concluded under the English mediation, was the fruit of this battle. Maria Theresa ceded Silesia: Frederic abandoned his allies: Saxony followed his example; and the Queen was left at liberty to turn her whole force against France and Bavaria.

She was every where triumphant. The French were compelled to evacuate Bohemia, and with difficulty effected their escape. The whole line of their retreat might be tracked by the corpses of thousands who had died of cold, fatigue and hunger. Many of those who reached their country carried with them the seeds of death. Bavaria was overrun by bands of ferocious warriors from that bloody debatable land which lies on the frontier between Christendom and Islam. The terrible names of the Pandoor, the Croat, and the Hussar, then first became familiar to western Europe. The unfortunate Charles of Bavaria, vanquished by Austria, betrayed by Prussia, driven from his hereditary states, and neglected by his allies, was hurried by shame and remorse to an untimely end. An English army appeared in the heart of Germany, and defeated the French at Dettingen. The Austrian captains already began to talk of completing the work of Marlborough and Eugene, and of compelling France to relinquish Alsace and the Three Bishoprics.

The Court of Versailles, in this peril, looked to Frederic for help. He had been guilty of two great treasons: perhaps he might be induced to commit a third. The Duchess of Chateauroux then held the chief influence over the feeble Lewis. She determined to send an agent to Berlin; and Voltaire was selected for the mission. He eagerly undertook the task; for, while his literary fame filled all Europe, he was troubled with a childish craving for political distinction. He was vain, and not without reason, of his address, and of his insinuating eloquence; and he flattered himself that he possessed boundless influence over the King of Prussia. The truth was that he knew, as yet, only one corner of Frederic's character. He was well acquainted with all the petty vanities and affectations of the poetaster;

but was not aware that these foibles were united with all the talents and vices which lead to success in active life, and that the unlucky versifier who pestered him with reams of middling Alexandrines, was the most vigilant, suspicious, and severe of politicians.

Voltaire was received with every mark of respect and friendship, was lodged in the palace, and had a seat daily at the royal table. The negotiation was of an extraordinary description. Nothing can be conceived more whimsical than the conferences which took place between the first literary man and the first practical man of the age, whom a strange weakness had induced to exchange their parts. The great poet would talk of nothing but treaties and guarantees, and the great King of nothing but metaphors and rhymes. On one occasion Voltaire put into his Majesty's hands a paper on the state of Europe, and received it back with verses scrawled on the margin. In secret they both laughed at each other. Voltaire did not spare the King's poems; and the King has left on record his opinion of Voltaire's diplomacy. "He had no credentials," says Frederic, "and the whole mission was a joke, a mere farce."

But what the influence of Voltaire could not effect, the rapid progress of the Austrian arms effected. If it should be in the power of Maria Theresa and George the Second to dictate terms of peace to France, what chance was there that Prussia would long retain Silesia? Frederic's conscience told him that he had acted perfidiously and inhumanly towards the Queen of Hungary. That her resentment was strong she had given ample proof; and of her respect for treaties he judged by his own. Guarantees, he said, were mere filigree, pretty to look at, but too brittle to bear the slightest pressure. He thought it his safest course to ally himself closely to France,

and again to attack the Empress Queen. Accordingly in the autumn of 1744, without notice, without any decent pretext, he recommenced hostilities, marched through the electorate of Saxony without troubling himself about the permission of the Elector, invaded Bohemia, took Prague, and even menaced Vienna.

It was now that, for the first time, he experienced the inconstancy of fortune. An Austrian army under Charles of Loraine threatened his communications with Silesia. Saxony was all in arms behind him. He found it necessary to save himself by a retreat. He afterwards owned that his failure was the natural effect of his own blunders. No general, he said, had ever committed greater faults. It must be added, that to the reverses of this campaign he always ascribed his subsequent successes. It was in the midst of difficulty and disgrace that he caught the first clear glimpse of the principles of the military art.

The memorable year 1745 followed. The war raged by sea and land, in Italy, in Germany, and in Flanders; and even England, after many years of profound internal quiet, saw, for the last time, hostile armies set in battle array against each other. This year is memorable in the life of Frederic, as the date at which his noviciate in the art of war may be said to have terminated. There have been great captains whose precocious and self-taught military skill resembled intuition. Condé, Clive, and Napoleon are examples. But Frederic was not one of these brilliant portents. His proficiency in military science was simply the proficiency which a man of vigorous faculties makes in any science to which he applies his mind with earnestness and industry. It was at Hohenfriedberg that he first proved how much he had profited by his errors, and by their consequences. His victory on that day was chiefly due to his skilful

dispositions, and convinced Europe that the prince who, a few years before, had stood aghast in the rout of Molwitz, had attained in the military art a mastery equalled by none of his contemporaries, or equalled by Saxe alone. The victory of Hohenfriedberg was speedily followed by that of Sorr.

In the meantime the arms of France had been victorious in the Low Countries. Frederic had no longer reason to fear that Maria Theresa would be able to give law to Europe, and he began to meditate a fourth breach of his engagements. The court of Versailles was alarmed and mortified. A letter of earnest expostulation, in the handwriting of Lewis, was sent to Berlin; but in vain. In the autumn of 1745, Frederic made peace with England, and, before the close of the year, with Austria also. The pretensions of Charles of Bavaria could present no obstacle to an accommodation. That unhappy prince was no more; and Francis of Loraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, was raised, with the general assent of the Germanic body, to the Imperial throne.

Prussia was again at peace; but the European war lasted till, in the year 1748, it was terminated by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Of all the powers that had taken part in it, the only gainer was Frederic. Not only had he added to his patrimony the fine province of Silesia: he had, by his unprincipled dexterity, succeeded so well in alternately depressing the scale of Austria and that of France, that he was generally regarded as holding the balance of Europe, a high dignity for one who ranked lowest among kings, and whose great-grandfather had been no more than a Margrave. By the public, the King of Prussia was considered as a politician destitute alike of morality and decency, insatiably rapacious, and shamelessly false; nor was the public much in the wrong. He was at the same time allowed to be a

man of parts, a rising general, a shrewd negotiator and administrator. Those qualities wherein he surpassed all mankind, were as yet unknown to others or to himself; for they were qualities which shine out only on a dark ground. His career had hitherto, with little interruption, been prosperous; and it was only in adversity, in adversity which seemed without hope or resource, in adversity which would have overwhelmed even men celebrated for strength of mind, that his real greatness could be shown.

He had, from the commencement of his reign, applied himself to public business after a fashion unknown among kings. Lewis the Fourteenth, indeed, had been his own prime minister, and had exercised a general superintendence over all the departments of the government; but this was not sufficient for Frederic. He was not content with being his own prime minister: he would be his own sole minister. Under him there was no room, not merely for a Richelieu or a Mazarin, but for a Colbert, a Louvois, or a Torcy. A love of labour for its own sake, a restless and insatiable longing to dictate, to intermeddle, to make his power felt, a profound scorn and distrust of his fellow-creatures, made him unwilling to ask counsel, to confide important secrets, to delegate ample powers. The highest functionaries under his government were mere clerks, and were not so much trusted by him as valuable clerks are often trusted by the heads of departments. He was his own treasurer, his own commander-in-chief, his own intendant of public works, his own minister for trade and justice, for home affairs and foreign affairs, his own master of the horse, steward, and chamberlain. Matters of which no chief of an office in any other government would ever hear were, in this singular monarchy, decided by the King in person. If a traveller wished for a good place to see a review, he had to write to Frederic,

and received next day, from a royal messenger, Frederic's answer signed by Frederic's own hand. This was an extravagant, a morbid activity. The public business would assuredly have been better done if each department had been put under a man of talents and integrity, and if the King had contented himself with a general control. In this manner the advantages which belong to unity of design, and the advantages which belong to the division of labour, would have been to a great extent combined. But such a system would not have suited the peculiar temper of Frederic. He could tolerate no will, no reason, in the state save his own. He wished for no abler assistance than that of penmen who had just understanding enough to translate and transcribe, to make out his scrawls, and to put his concise Yes and No into an official form. Of the higher intellectual faculties, there is as much in a copying machine, or a lithographic press, as he required from a secretary of the cabinet.

His own exertions were such as were hardly to be expected from a human body or a human mind. At Potsdam, his ordinary residence, he rose at three in summer and four in winter. A page soon appeared, with a large basket full of all the letters which had arrived for the King by the last courier, despatches from ambassadors, reports from officers of revenue, plans of buildings, proposals for draining marshes, complaints from persons who thought themselves aggrieved, applications from persons who wanted titles, military commissions, and civil situations. He examined the seals with a keen eye; for he was never for a moment free from the suspicion that some fraud might be practised on him. Then he read the letters, divided them into several packets, and signified his pleasure, generally by a mark, often by two or three words, now and then by some cutting epigram.

By eight he had generally finished this part of his task. The adjutant-general was then in attendance, and received instructions for the day as to all the military arrangements of the kingdom. Then the King went to review his guards, not as kings ordinarily review their guards, but with the minute attention and severity of an old drill-sergeant. In the meantime the four cabinet secretaries had been employed in answering the letters on which the King had that morning signified his will. These unhappy men were forced to work all the year round like negro slaves in the time of the sugar-crop. They never had a holiday. They never knew what it was to dine. It was necessary that, before they stirred, they should finish the whole of their work. The King, always on his guard against treachery, took from the heap a handful of letters at random, and looked into them to see whether his instructions had been exactly followed. This was no bad security against foul play on the part of the secretaries; for if one of them were detected in a trick, he might think himself fortunate if he escaped with five years of imprisonment in a dungeon. Frederic then signed the replies, and all were sent off the same evening.

The general principles on which this strange government was conducted, deserve attention. The policy of Frederic was essentially the same as his father's; but Frederic, while he carried that policy to lengths to which his father never thought of carrying it, cleared it at the same time from the absurdities with which his father had encumbered it. The King's first object was to have a great, efficient, and well-trained army. He had a kingdom which in extent and population was hardly in the second rank of European powers; and yet he aspired to a place not inferior to that of the sovereigns of England, France, and Austria. For that end it was necessary

that Prussia should be all sting. Lewis the Fifteenth, with five times as many subjects as Frederic, and more than five times as large a revenue, had not a more formidable army. The proportion which the soldiers in Prussia bore to the people seems hardly credible. Of the males in the vigour of life, a seventh part were probably under arms; and this great force had, by drilling, by reviewing, and by the unsparing use of cane and scourge, been taught to perform all evolutions with a rapidity and a precision which would have astonished Villars or Eugene. The elevated feelings which are necessary to the best kind of army were then wanting to the Prussian service. In those ranks were not found the religious and political enthusiasm which inspired the pikemen of Cromwell, the patriotic ardour, the thirst of glory, the devotion to a great leader, which inflamed the Old Guard of Napoleon. But in all the mechanical parts of the military calling, the Prussians were as superior to the English and French troops of that day as the English and French troops to a rustic militia.

Though the pay of the Prussian soldier was small, though every rixdollar of extraordinary charge was scrutinised by Frederic with a vigilance and suspicion such as Mr. Joseph Hume never brought to the examination of an army estimate, the expense of such an establishment was, for the means of the country, enormous. In order that it might not be utterly ruinous, it was necessary that every other expense should be cut down to the lowest possible point. Accordingly Frederic, though his dominions bordered on the sea, had no navy. He neither had nor wished to have colonies. His judges, his fiscal officers, were meanly paid. His ministers at foreign courts walked on foot, or drove shabby old carriages till the axletrees gave way. Even to his highest diplomatic agents, who resided at London and Paris,

he allowed less than a thousand pounds sterling a year. The royal household was managed with a frugality unusual in the establishments of opulent subjects, unexampled in any other palace. The King loved good eating and drinking, and during great part of his life took pleasure in seeing his table surrounded by guests; yet the whole charge of his kitchen was brought within the sum of two thousand pounds sterling a year. He examined every extraordinary item with a care which might be thought to suit the mistress of a boarding house better than a great prince. When more than four rixdollars were asked of him for a hundred oysters, he stormed as if he had heard that one of his generals had sold a fortress to the Empress Queen. Not a bottle of Champagne was uncorked without his express order. The game of the royal parks and forests, a serious head of expenditure in most kingdoms, was to him a source of profit. The whole was farmed out: and though the farmers were almost ruined by their contract, the King would grant them no remission. His wardrobe consisted of one fine gala dress, which lasted him all his life; of two or three old coats fit for Monmouth Street, of yellow waistcoats soiled with snuff, and of huge boots embrowned by time. One taste alone sometimes allured him beyond the limits of parsimony, nay, even beyond the limits of prudence, the taste for building. In all other things his economy was such as we might call by a harsher name, if we did not reflect that his funds were drawn from a heavily taxed people, and that it was impossible for him, without excessive tyranny, to keep up at once a formidable army and a splendid court.

Considered as an administrator, Frederic had undoubtedly many titles to praise. Order was strictly maintained throughout his dominions. Property was secure. A great liberty of speaking and of writing

was allowed. Confident in the irresistible strength derived from a great army, the King looked down on malcontents and libellers with a wise disdain; and gave little encouragement to spies and informers. When he was told of the disaffection of one of his subjects, he merely asked, "How many thousand men can he bring into the field?" He once saw a crowd staring at something on a wall. He rode up, and found that the object of curiosity was a scurrilous placard against himself. The placard had been posted up so high that it was not easy to read it. Frederic ordered his attendants to take it down and put it lower. "My people and I," he said, "have come to an agreement which satisfies us both. They are to say what they please, and I am to do what I please." No person would have dared to publish in London satires on George the Second approaching to the atrocity of those satires on Frederic, which the booksellers at Berlin sold with impunity. One bookseller sent to the palace a copy of the most stinging lampoon that perhaps was ever written in the world, the Memoirs of Voltaire, published by Beaumarchais, and asked for his majesty's orders. "Do not advertise it in an offensive manner," said the King, "but sell it by all means. I hope it will pay you well." Even among statesmen accustomed to the license of a free press, such steadfastness of mind as this is not very common.

It is due also to the memory of Frederic to say that he earnestly laboured to secure to his people the great blessing of cheap and speedy justice. He was one of the first rulers who abolished the cruel and absurd practice of torture. No sentence of death, pronounced by the ordinary tribunals, was executed without his sanction; and his sanction, except in cases of murder, was rarely given. Towards his troops he acted in a very different manner. Military offences were punished with such barbarous scourging

that to be shot was considered by the Prussian soldier as a secondary punishment. Indeed, the principle which pervaded Frederic's whole policy was this, that the more severely the army is governed, the safer it is to treat the rest of the community with lenity.

Religious persecution was unknown under his government, unless some foolish and unjust restrictions which lay upon the Jews may be regarded as forming an exception. His policy with respect to the Catholics of Silesia presented an honourable contrast to the policy which, under very similar circumstances, England long followed with respect to the Catholics of Ireland. Every form of religion and irreligion found an asylum in his states. The scoffer whom the parliaments of France had sentenced to a cruel death, was consoled by a commission in the Prussian service. The Jesuit who could show his face nowhere else, who in Britain was still subject to penal laws, who was proscribed by France, Spain, Portugal, and Naples, who had been given up even by the Vatican, found safety and the means of subsistence in the Prussian dominions.

Most of the vices of Frederic's administration resolve themselves into one vice, the spirit of meddling. The indefatigable activity of his intellect, his dictatorial temper, his military habits, all inclined him to this great fault. He drilled his people as he drilled his grenadiers. Capital and industry were diverted from their natural direction by a crowd of preposterous regulations. There was a monopoly of coffee, a monopoly of tobacco, a monopoly of refined sugar. The public money, of which the King was generally so sparing, was lavishly spent in ploughing bogs, in planting mulberry trees amidst the sand, in bringing sheep from Spain to improve the Saxon wool, in bestowing prizes for fine yarn, in building

manufactories of porcelain, manufactories of carpets, manufactories of hardware, manufactories of lace. Neither the experience of other rulers, nor his own, could ever teach him that something more than an edict and a grant of public money was required to create a Lyons, a Brussels, or a Birmingham.

For his commercial policy, however, there was some excuse. He had on his side illustrious examples and popular prejudice. Grievously as he erred, he erred in company with his age. In other departments his meddling was altogether without apology. He interfered with the course of justice as well as with the course of trade; and set up his own crude notions of equity against the law as expounded by the unanimous voice of the gravest magistrates. It never occurred to him that men whose lives were passed in adjudicating on questions of civil right were more likely to form correct opinions on such questions than a prince whose attention was divided among a thousand objects, and who had never read a law-book through. The resistance opposed to him by the tribunals inflamed him to fury. He reviled his Chancellor. He kicked the shins of his Judges. He did not, it is true, intend to act unjustly. He firmly believed that he was doing right, and defending the cause of the poor against the wealthy. Yet this well-meant meddling probably did far more harm than all the explosions of his evil passions during the whole of his long reign. We could make shift to live under a debauchee or a tyrant; but to be ruled by a busybody is more than human nature can bear.

The same passion for directing and regulating appeared in every part of the King's policy. Every lad of a certain station in life was forced to go to certain schools within the Prussian dominions. If a young Prussian repaired, though but for a few weeks, to Leyden or Göttingen, for the purpose of study, the

offence was punished with civil disabilities, and sometimes with the confiscation of property. Nobody was to travel without the royal permission. If the permission were granted, the pocket money of the tourist was fixed by royal ordinance. A merchant might take with him two hundred and fifty rixdollars in gold, a noble was allowed to take four hundred; for it may be observed, in passing, that Frederic studiously kept up the old distinction between the nobles and the community. In speculation, he was a French philosopher, but in action, a German prince. He talked and wrote about the privileges of blood in the style of Sieyès; but in practice no chapter in the empire looked with a keener eye to genealogies and quarterings.

Such was Frederic the Ruler. But there was another Frederic, the Frederic of Rheinsberg, the fiddler and flute player, the poetaster and metaphysician. Amidst the cares of state the King had retained his passion for music, for reading, for writing, for literary society. To these amusements he devoted all the time that he could snatch from the business of war and government; and perhaps more light is thrown on his character by what passed during his hours of relaxation, than by his battles or his laws.

It was the just boast of Schiller that, in his country, no Augustus, no Lorenzo, had watched over the infancy of poetry. The rich and energetic language of Luther, driven by the Latin from the schools of pedants, and by the French from the palaces of kings, had taken refuge among the people. Of the powers of that language Frederic had no notion. He generally spoke of it, and of those who used it, with the contempt of ignorance. His library consisted of French books; at his table nothing was heard but French conversation. The associates of his hours of

relaxation were, for the most part, foreigners. Britain furnished to the royal circle two distinguished men, born in the highest rank, and driven by civil dissensions from the land to which, under happier circumstances, their talents and virtues might have been a source of strength and glory. George Keith, Earl Marischal of Scotland, had taken arms for the house of Stuart in 1715 ; and his younger brother James, then only seventeen years old, had fought gallantly by his side. When all was lost they retired together to the Continent, roved from country to country, served under various standards, and so bore themselves as to win the respect and good will of many who had no love for the Jacobite cause. Their long wanderings terminated at Potsdam ; nor had Frederic any associates who deserved or obtained so large a share of his esteem. They were not only accomplished men, but nobles and warriors, capable of serving him in war and diplomacy, as well as of amusing him at supper. Alone of all his companions they appear never to have had reason to complain of his demeanour towards them. Some of those who knew the palace best pronounced that Lord Marischal was the only human being whom Frederic ever really loved.

Italy sent to the parties at Potsdam the ingenious and amiable Algarotti, and Bastiani, the most crafty, cautious, and servile of Abbés. But the greater part of the society which Frederic had assembled round him, was drawn from France. Maupertuis had acquired some celebrity by the journey which he had made to Lapland, for the purpose of ascertaining, by actual measurement, the shape of our planet. He was placed in the Chair of the Academy of Berlin, a humble imitation of the renowned Academy of Paris. Baculard D'Arnaud, a young poet, who was thought to have given promise of great things, had been in-

duced to quit his country, and to reside at the Prussian Court. The Marquess D'Argens was among the King's favourite companions, on account, as it should seem, of the strong opposition between their characters. The parts of D'Argens were good, and his manners those of a finished French gentleman; but his whole soul was dissolved in sloth, timidity, and self-indulgence. His was one of that abject class of minds which are superstitious without being religious. Hating Christianity with a rancour which made him incapable of rational inquiry, unable to see in the harmony and beauty of the universe the traces of divine power and wisdom, he was the slave of dreams and omens, would not sit down to table with thirteen in company, turned pale if the salt fell towards him, begged his guests not to cross their knives and forks on their plates, and would not for the world commence a journey on Friday. His health was a subject of constant anxiety to him. Whenever his head ached, or his pulse beat quick, his dastardly fears and effeminate precautions were the jest of all Berlin. All this suited the King's purpose admirably. He wanted somebody by whom he might be amused, and whom he might despise. When he wished to pass half an hour in easy polished conversation, D'Argens was an excellent companion; when he wanted to vent his spleen and contempt, D'Argens was an excellent butt.

With these associates, and others of the same class, Frederic loved to spend the time which he could steal from public cares. He wished his supper-parties to be gay and easy. He invited his guests to lay aside all restraint, and to forget that he was at the head of a hundred and sixty thousand soldiers, and was absolute master of the life and liberty of all who sat at meat with him. There was, therefore, at these parties the outward show of ease. The wit and

learning of the company were ostentatiously displayed. The discussions on history and literature were often highly interesting. But the absurdity of all the religions known among men was the chief topic of conversation; and the audacity with which doctrines and names venerated throughout Christendom were treated on these occasions startled even persons accustomed to the society of French and English freethinkers. Real liberty, however, or real affection, was in this brilliant society not to be found. Absolute kings seldom have friends: and Frederic's faults were such as, even where perfect equality exists, make friendship exceedingly precarious. He had indeed many qualities, which, on a first acquaintance, were captivating. His conversation was lively; his manners, to those whom he desired to please, were even caressing. No man could flatter with more delicacy. No man succeeded more completely in inspiring those who approached him with vague hopes of some great advantage from his kindness. But under this fair exterior he was a tyrant, suspicious, disdainful, and malevolent. He had one taste which may be pardoned in a boy, but which when habitually and deliberately indulged by a man of mature age and strong understanding, is almost invariably the sign of a bad heart, a taste for severe practical jokes. If a courtier was fond of dress, oil was flung over his richest suit. If he was fond of money, some prank was invented to make him disburse more than he could spare. If he was hypochondriacal, he was made to believe that he had the dropsy. If he had particularly set his heart on visiting a place, a letter was forged to frighten him from going thither. These things, it may be said, are trifles. They are so; but they are indications, not to be mistaken, of a nature to which the sight of human suffering and human degradation is an agreeable excitement.

Frederic had a keen eye for the foibles of others, and loved to communicate his discoveries. He had some talent for sarcasm, and considerable skill in detecting the sore places where sarcasm would be most acutely felt. His vanity, as well as his malignity, found gratification in the vexation and confusion of those who smarted under his caustic jests. Yet in truth his success on these occasions belonged quite as much to the king as to the wit. We read that Commodus descended, sword in hand, into the arena against a wretched gladiator, armed only with a foil of lead, and after shedding the blood of the helpless victim, struck medals to commemorate the inglorious victory. The triumphs of Frederic in the war of repartee were of much the same kind. How to deal with him was the most puzzling of questions. To appear constrained in his presence was to disobey his commands, and to spoil his amusement. Yet if his associates were enticed by his graciousness to indulge in the familiarity of a cordial intimacy, he was certain to make them repent of their presumption by some cruel humiliation. To resent his affronts was perilous; yet not to resent them was to deserve and to invite them. In his view, those who mutinied were insolent and ungrateful; those who submitted were curs made to receive bones and kickings with the same fawning patience. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how anything short of the rage of hunger should have induced men to bear the misery of being the associates of the Great King. It was no lucrative post. His Majesty was as severe and economical in his friendships as in the other charges of his establishment, and as unlikely to give a rixdollar too much for his guests as for his dinners. The sum which he allowed to a poet or a philosopher was the very smallest sum for which such poet or philosopher could be induced to sell himself into slavery; and the bondsman might

think himself fortunate, if what had been so grudgingly given was not, after years of suffering, rudely and arbitrarily withdrawn.

Potsdam was, in truth, what it was called by one of its most illustrious inmates, the Palace of Alcina. At the first glance it seemed to be a delightful spot, where every intellectual and physical enjoyment awaited the happy adventurer. Every new comer was received with eager hospitality, intoxicated with flattery, encouraged to expect prosperity and greatness. It was in vain that a long succession of favourites who had entered that abode with delight and hope, and who, after a short term of delusive happiness, had been doomed to expiate their folly by years of wretchedness and degradation, raised their voices to warn the aspirant who approached the charmed threshold. Some had wisdom enough to discover the truth early, and spirit enough to fly without looking back; others lingered on to a cheerless and unhonoured old age. We have no hesitation in saying that the poorest author of that time in London, sleeping on a bulk, dining in a cellar, with a cravat of paper, and a skewer for a shirt-pin, was a happier man than any of the literary inmates of Frederic's court.

But of all who entered the enchanted garden in the inebriation of delight, and quitted it in agonies of rage and shame, the most remarkable was Voltaire. Many circumstances had made him desirous of finding a home at a distance from his country. His fame had raised him up enemies. His sensibility gave them a formidable advantage over him. They were, indeed, contemptible assailants. Of all that they wrote against him, nothing has survived except what he has himself preserved. But the constitution of his mind resembled the constitution of those bodies in which the slightest scratch of a bramble, or the

bite of a gnat, never fails to fester. Though his reputation was rather raised than lowered by the abuse of such writers as Fréron and Desfontaines, though the vengeance which he took on Fréron and Desfontaines was such, that scourging, branding, pillorying, would have been a trifle to it, there is reason to believe that they gave him far more pain than he ever gave them. Though he enjoyed during his own lifetime the reputation of a classic, though he was extolled by his contemporaries above all poets, philosophers, and historians, though his works were read with as much delight and admiration at Moscow and Westminster, at Florence and Stockholm, as at Paris itself, he was yet tormented by that restless jealousy which should seem to belong only to minds burning with the desire of fame, and yet conscious of impotence. To men of letters who could by no possibility be his rivals, he was, if they behaved well to him, not merely just, not merely courteous, but often a hearty friend and a munificent benefactor. But to every writer who rose to a celebrity approaching his own, he became either a disguised or an avowed enemy. He slily depreciated Montesquieu and Buffon. He publicly, and with violent outrage, made war on Rousseau. Nor had he the art of hiding his feelings under the semblance of good humour or of contempt. With all his great talents, and all his long experience of the world, he had no more self-command than a petted child or a hysterical woman. Whenever he was mortified, he exhausted the whole rhetoric of anger and sorrow to express his mortification. His torrents of bitter words, his stamping and cursing, his grimaces and his tears of rage, were a rich feast to those abject natures, whose delight is in the agonies of powerful spirits and in the abasement of immortal names. These creatures had now found out a way of galling him to the very quick. In one walk, at least,

it had been admitted by envy itself that he was without a living competitor. Since Racine had been laid among the great men whose dust made the holy precinct of Port Royal holier, no tragic poet had appeared who could contest the palm with the author of Zaire, of Alzire, and of Merope. At length a rival was announced. Old Crébillon, who, many years before, had obtained some theatrical success, and who had long been forgotten, came forth from his garret in one of the meanest lanes near the Rue St. Antoine, and was welcomed by the acclamations of envious men of letters, and of a capricious populace. A thing called Catiline, which he had written in his retirement, was acted with boundless applause. Of this execrable piece it is sufficient to say, that the plot turns on a love affair, carried on in all the forms of Scudery, between Catiline, whose confidant is the Prætor Lentulus, and Tullia, the daughter of Cicero. The theatre resounded with acclamations. The king pensioned the successful poet; and the coffeehouses pronounced that Voltaire was a clever man, but that the real tragic inspiration, the celestial fire which had glowed in Corneille and Racine, was to be found in Crébillon alone.

The blow went to Voltaire's heart. Had his wisdom and fortitude been in proportion to the fertility of his intellect, and to the brilliancy of his wit, he would have seen that it was out of the power of all the puffers and detractors in Europe to put Catiline above Zaire; but he had none of the magnanimous patience with which Milton and Bentley left their claims to the unerring judgment of time. He eagerly engaged in an undignified competition with Crébillon, and produced a series of plays on the same subjects which his rival had treated. These pieces were coolly received. Angry with the court, angry with the capital, Voltaire began to find pleasure in the prospect of

exile. His attachment for Madame du Châtelet long prevented him from executing his purpose. Her death set him at liberty; and he determined to take refuge at Berlin.

To Berlin he was invited by a series of letters, couched in terms of the most enthusiastic friendship and admiration. For once the rigid parsimony of Frederic seemed to have relaxed. Orders, honourable offices, a liberal pension, a well-served table, stately apartments under a royal roof, were offered in return for the pleasure and honour which were expected from the society of the first wit of the age. A thousand louis were remitted for the charges of the journey. No ambassador setting out from Berlin for a court of the first rank, had ever been more amply supplied. But Voltaire was not satisfied. At a later period, when he possessed an ample fortune, he was one of the most liberal of men; but till his means had become equal to his wishes, his greediness for lucre was unrestrained either by justice or by shame. He had the effrontery to ask for a thousand louis more, in order to enable him to bring his niece, Madame Denis, the ugliest of coquettes, in his company. The indelicate rapacity of the poet produced its natural effect on the severe and frugal King. The answer was a dry refusal. "I did not," said his Majesty, "solicit the honour of the lady's society." On this, Voltaire went off into a paroxysm of childish rage. "Was there ever such avarice? He has hundreds of tubs full of dollars in his vaults, and haggles with me about a poor thousand louis." It seemed that the negotiation would be broken off; but Frederic, with great dexterity, affected indifference, and seemed inclined to transfer his idolatry to Baculard D'Arnaud. His Majesty even wrote some bad verses, of which the sense was, that Voltaire was a setting sun, and that Arnaud was rising. Good-natured friends

soon carried the lines to Voltaire. He was in his bed. He jumped out in his shirt, danced about the room with rage, and sent for his passport and his post-horses. It was not difficult to foresee the end of a connection which had such a beginning.

It was in the year 1750 that Voltaire left the great capital, which he was not to see again till, after the lapse of near thirty years, he returned, bowed down by extreme old age, to die in the midst of a splendid and ghastly triumph. His reception in Prussia was such as might well have elated a less vain and excitable mind. He wrote to his friends at Paris that the kindness and the attention with which he had been welcomed surpassed description, that the King was the most amiable of men, that Potsdam was the paradise of philosophers. He was created chamberlain, and received, together with his gold key, the cross of an order, and a patent ensuring to him a pension of eight hundred pounds sterling a year for life. A hundred and sixty pounds a year were promised to his niece if she survived him. The royal cooks and coachmen were put at his disposal. He was lodged in the same apartments in which Saxe had lived, when, at the height of power and glory, he visited Prussia. Frederic, indeed, stooped for a time even to use the language of adulation. He pressed to his lips the meagre hand of the little grinning skeleton, whom he regarded as the dispenser of immortal renown. He would add, he said, to the titles which he owed to his ancestors and his sword, another title, derived from his last and proudest acquisition. His style should run thus:—Frederic, King of Prussia, Margrave of Brandenburg, Sovereign Duke of Silesia, Possessor of Voltaire. But even amidst the delights of the honeymoon, Voltaire's sensitive vanity began to take alarm. A few days after his arrival, he could not help telling his

niece that the amiable King had a trick of giving a sly scratch with one hand, while patting and stroking with the other. Soon came hints not the less alarming, because mysterious. "The supper parties are delicious. The King is the life of the company. But—I have operas and comedies, reviews and concerts, my studies and books. But—but—Berlin is fine, the princesses charming, the maids of honour handsome. But"——

This eccentric friendship was fast cooling. Never had there met two persons so exquisitely fitted to plague each other. Each of them had exactly the fault of which the other was most impatient; and they were, in different ways, the most impatient of mankind. Frederic was frugal, almost niggardly. When he had secured his plaything, he began to think that he had bought it too dear. Voltaire, on the other hand, was greedy, even to the extent of impudence and knavery; and conceived that the favourite of a monarch who had barrels full of gold and silver laid up in cellars ought to make a fortune which a receiver-general might envy. They soon discovered each other's feelings. Both were angry; and a war began, in which Frederic stooped to the part of Harpagon, and Voltaire to that of Scapin. It is humiliating to relate, that the great warrior and statesman gave orders that his guest's allowance of sugar and chocolate should be curtailed. It is, if possible, a still more humiliating fact, that Voltaire indemnified himself by pocketing the wax-candles in the royal antechamber. Disputes about money, however, were not the most serious disputes of these extraordinary associates. The sarcasms of the King soon galled the sensitive temper of the poet. D'Arnaud and D'Argens, Guichard and La Métrie, might, for the sake of a morsel of bread, be willing to bear the insolence of a master; but Voltaire was of another

order He knew that he was a potentate as well as Frederic, that his European reputation, and his incomparable power of covering whatever he hated with ridicule, made him an object of dread even to the leaders of armies and the rulers of nations. In truth, of all the intellectual weapons which have ever been wielded by man, the most terrible was the mockery of Voltaire. Bigots and tyrants, who had never been moved by the wailing and cursing of millions, turned pale at his name. Principles unassailable by reason, principles which had withstood the fiercest attacks of power, the most valuable truths, the most generous sentiments, the noblest and most graceful images, the purest reputations, the most august institutions, began to look mean and loathsome as soon as that withering smile was turned upon them. To every opponent, however strong in his cause and his talents, in his station and his character, who ventured to encounter the great scoffer, might be addressed the caution which was given of old to the Archangel :—

> "I forewarn thee, shun
> His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
> To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
> Though temper'd heavenly; for that fatal dint,
> Save Him who reigns above, none can resist."

We cannot pause to recount how often that rare talent was exercised against rivals worthy of esteem; how often it was used to crush and torture enemies worthy only of silent disdain; how often it was perverted to the more noxious purpose of destroying the last solace of earthly misery, and the last restraint on earthly power. Neither can we pause to tell how often it was used to vindicate justice, humanity, and toleration, the principles of sound philosophy, the principles of free government. This is not the place for a full character of Voltaire.

Causes of quarrel multiplied fast. Voltaire, who, partly from love of money, and partly from love of excitement, was always fond of stockjobbing, became implicated in transactions of at least a dubious character. The King was delighted at having such an opportunity to humble his guest; and bitter reproaches and complaints were exchanged. Voltaire, too, was soon at war with the other men of letters who surrounded the King; and this irritated Frederic, who, however, had himself chiefly to blame: for, from that love of tormenting which was in him a ruling passion, he perpetually lavished extravagant praises on small men and bad books, merely in order that he might enjoy the mortification and rage which, on such occasions, Voltaire took no pains to conceal. His Majesty, however, soon had reason to regret the pains which he had taken to kindle jealousy among the members of his household. The whole palace was in a ferment with literary intrigues and cabals. It was to no purpose that the imperial voice, which kept a hundred and sixty thousand soldiers in order, was raised to quiet the contention of the exasperated wits. It was far easier to stir up such a storm than to lull it. Nor was Frederic, in his capacity of wit, by any means without his own share of vexations. He had sent a large quantity of verses to Voltaire, and requested that they might be returned with remarks and corrections. "See," exclaimed Voltaire, "what a quantity of his dirty linen the King has sent me to wash!" Talebearers were not wanting to carry the sarcasm to the royal ear; and Frederic was as much incensed as a Grub-street writer who had found his name in the Dunciad.

This could not last. A circumstance which, when the mutual regard of the friends was in its first glow, would merely have been matter for laughter, produced a violent explosion. Maupertuis enjoyed as much of

Frederic's good will as any man of letters. He was President of the Academy of Berlin; and he stood second to Voltaire, though at an immense distance, in the literary society which had been assembled at the Prussian court. Frederic had, by playing for his own amusement on the feelings of the two jealous and vainglorious Frenchmen, succeeded in producing a bitter enmity between them. Voltaire resolved to set his mark, a mark never to be effaced, on the forehead of Maupertuis, and wrote the exquisitely ludicrous Diatribe of Doctor Akakia. He showed this little piece to Frederic, who had too much taste and too much malice not to relish such delicious pleasantry. In truth, even at this time of day, it is not easy for any person who has the least perception of the ridiculous to read the jokes on the Latin city, the Patagonians, and the hole to the centre of the earth, without laughing till he cries. But though Frederic was diverted by this charming pasquinade, he was unwilling that it should get abroad. His self-love was interested. He had selected Maupertuis to fill the chair of his Academy. If all Europe were taught to laugh at Maupertuis, would not the reputation of the Academy, would not even the dignity of its royal patron, be in some degree compromised? The King, therefore, begged Voltaire to suppress this performance. Voltaire promised to do so, and broke his word. The Diatribe was published, and received with shouts of merriment and applause by all who could read the French language. The King stormed. Voltaire, with his usual disregard of truth, asserted his innocence, and made up some lie about a printer or an amanuensis. The King was not to be so imposed upon. He ordered the pamphlet to be burned by the common hangman, and insisted upon having an apology from Voltaire, couched in the most abject terms. Voltaire sent

back to the King his cross, his key, and the patent of his pension. After this burst of rage, the strange pair began to be ashamed of their violence, and went through the forms of reconciliation. But the breach was irreparable; and Voltaire took his leave of Frederic for ever. They parted with cold civility; but their hearts were big with resentment. Voltaire had in his keeping a volume of the King's poetry, and forgot to return it. This was, we believe, merely one of the oversights which men setting out upon a journey often commit. That Voltaire could have meditated plagiarism is quite incredible. He would not, we are confident, for the half of Frederic's kingdom have consented to father Frederic's verses. The King, however, who rated his own writings much above their value, and who was inclined to see all Voltaire's actions in the worst light, was enraged to think that his favourite compositions were in the hands of an enemy, as thievish as a daw and as mischievous as a monkey. In the anger excited by this thought, he lost sight of reason and decency, and determined on committing an outrage at once odious and ridiculous.

Voltaire had reached Frankfort. His niece, Madame Denis, came thither to meet him. He conceived himself secure from the power of his late master, when he was arrested by order of the Prussian resident. The precious volume was delivered up. But the Prussian agents had, no doubt, been instructed not to let Voltaire escape without some gross indignity. He was confined twelve days in a wretched hovel. Sentinels with fixed bayonets kept guard over him. His niece was dragged through the mire by the soldiers. Sixteen hundred dollars were extorted from him by his insolent gaolers. It is absurd to say that this outrage is not to be attributed to the King. Was any body

punished for it? Was any body called in question for it? Was it not consistent with Frederic's character? Was it not of a piece with his conduct on other similar occasions? Is it not notorious that he repeatedly gave private directions to his officers to pillage and demolish the houses of persons against whom he had a grudge, charging them at the same time to take their measures in such a way that his name might not be compromised? He acted thus towards Count Bruhl in the Seven Years' War. Why should we believe that he would have been more scrupulous with regard to Voltaire?

When at length the illustrious prisoner regained his liberty, the prospect before him was but dreary. He was an exile both from the country of his birth and from the country of his adoption. The French government had taken offence at his journey to Prussia, and would not permit him to return to Paris; and in the vicinity of Prussia it was not safe for him to remain.

He took refuge on the beautiful shores of Lake Leman. There, loosed from every tie which had hitherto restrained him, and having little to hope or to fear from courts and churches, he began his long war against all that, whether for good or evil, had authority over man; for what Burke said of the Constituent Assembly, was eminently true of this its great forerunner: Voltaire could not build: he could only pull down: he was the very Vitruvius of ruin. He has bequeathed to us not a single doctrine to be called by his name, not a single addition to the stock of our positive knowledge. But no human teacher ever left behind him so vast and terrible a wreck of truths and falsehoods, of things noble and things base, of things useful and things pernicious. From the time when his sojourn beneath the Alps commenced, the dramatist, the wit, the historian, was

merged in a more important character. He was now the patriarch, the founder of a sect, the chief of a conspiracy, the prince of a wide intellectual commonwealth. He often enjoyed a pleasure dear to the better part of his nature, the pleasure of vindicating innocence which had no other helper, of repairing cruel wrongs, of punishing tyranny in high places. He had also the satisfaction, not less acceptable to his ravenous vanity, of hearing terrified Capuchins call him the Antichrist. But whether employed in works of benevolence, or in works of mischief, he never forgot Potsdam and Frankfort; and he listened anxiously to every murmur which indicated that a tempest was gathering in Europe, and that his vengeance was at hand.

He soon had his wish. Maria Theresa had never for a moment forgotten the great wrong which she had received at the hand of Frederic. Young and delicate, just left an orphan, just about to be a mother, she had been compelled to fly from the ancient capital of her race; she had seen her fair inheritance dismembered by robbers, and of those robbers he had been the foremost. Without a pretext, without a provocation, in defiance of the most sacred engagements, he had attacked the helpless ally whom he was bound to defend. The Empress Queen had the faults as well as the virtues which are connected with quick sensibility and a high spirit. There was no peril which she was not ready to brave, no calamity which she was not ready to bring on her subjects, or on the whole human race, if only she might once taste the sweetness of a complete revenge. Revenge, too, presented itself to her narrow and superstitious mind, in the guise of duty. Silesia had been wrested not only from the House of Austria, but from the Church of Rome. The conqueror had indeed permitted his

new subjects to worship God after their own fashion; but this was not enough. To bigotry it seemed an intolerable hardship that the Catholic Church, having long enjoyed ascendency, should be compelled to content itself with equality. Nor was this the only circumstance which led Maria Theresa to regard her enemy as the enemy of God. The profaneness of Frederic's writings and conversation, and the frightful rumours which were circulated respecting the immorality of his private life, naturally shocked a woman who believed with the firmest faith all that her confessor told her, and who, though surrounded by temptations, though young and beautiful, though ardent in all her passions, though possessed of absolute power, had preserved her fame unsullied even by the breath of slander.

To recover Silesia, to humble the dynasty of Hohenzollern to the dust, was the great object of her life. She toiled during many years for this end, with zeal as indefatigable as that which the poet ascribes to the stately goddess who tired out her immortal horses in the work of raising the nations against Troy, and who offered to give up to destruction her darling Sparta and Mycenæ, if only she might once see the smoke going up from the palace of Priam. With even such a spirit did the proud Austrian Juno strive to array against her foe a coalition such as Europe had never seen. Nothing would content her but that the whole civilized world, from the White Sea to the Adriatic, from the Bay of Biscay to the pastures of the wild horses of the Tanais, should be combined in arms against one petty state.

She early succeeded by various arts in obtaining the adhesion of Russia. An ample share of spoil was promised to the King of Poland; and that prince, governed by his favourite, Count Bruhl, readily

promised the assistance of the Saxon forces. The great difficulty was with France. That the Houses of Bourbon and of Hapsburg should ever cordially co-operate in any great scheme of European policy, had long been thought, to use the strong expression of Frederic, just as impossible as that fire and water should amalgamate. The whole history of the Continent, during two centuries and a half, had been the history of the mutual jealousies and enmities of France and Austria. Since the administration of Richelieu, above all, it had been considered as the plain policy of the Most Christian King to thwart on all occasions the Court of Vienna, and to protect every member of the Germanic body who stood up against the dictation of the Cæsars. Common sentiments of religion had been unable to mitigate this strong antipathy. The rulers of France, even while clothed in the Roman purple, even while persecuting the heretics of Rochelle and Auvergne, had still looked with favour on the Lutheran and Calvinistic princes who were struggling against the chief of the empire. If the French ministers paid any respect to the traditional rules handed down to them through many generations, they would have acted towards Frederic as the greatest of their predecessors acted towards Gustavus Adolphus. That there was deadly enmity between Prussia and Austria was of itself a sufficient reason for close friendship between Prussia and France. With France Frederic could never have any serious controversy. His territories were so situated that his ambition, greedy and unscrupulous as it was, could never impel him to attack her of his own accord. He was more than half a Frenchman: he wrote, spoke, read nothing but French: he delighted in French society: the admiration of the French he proposed to himself as the best reward of all his exploits. It seemed incredible that any French

government, however notorious for levity or stupidity, could spurn away such an ally.

The Court of Vienna, however, did not despair. The Austrian diplomatists propounded a new scheme of politics, which, it must be owned, was not altogether without plausibility. The great powers, according to this theory, had long been under a delusion. They had looked on each other as natural enemies, while in truth they were natural allies. A succession of cruel wars had devastated Europe, had thinned the population, had exhausted the public resources, had loaded governments with an immense burden of debt; and when, after two hundred years of murderous hostility or of hollow truce, the illustrious Houses whose enmity had distracted the world sat down to count their gains, to what did the real advantage on either side amount? Simply to this, that they had kept each other from thriving. It was not the King of France, it was not the Emperor, who had reaped the fruits of the Thirty Years' War, or of the War of the Pragmatic Sanction. Those fruits had been pilfered by states of the second and third rank, which, secured against jealousy by their insignificance, had dexterously aggrandised themselves while pretending to serve the animosity of the great chiefs of Christendom. While the lion and tiger were tearing each other, the jackal had run off into the jungle with the prey. The real gainer by the Thirty Years' War had been neither France nor Austria, but Sweden. The real gainer by the war of the Pragmatic Sanction had been neither France nor Austria, but the upstart of Brandenburg. France had made great efforts, had added largely to her military glory, and largely to her public burdens; and for what end? Merely that Frederic might rule Silesia. For this and this alone one French army, wasted by sword and famine, had perished in

Bohemia; and another had purchased, with floods of the noblest blood, the barren glory of Fontenoy. And this prince, for whom France had suffered so much, was he a grateful, was he even an honest ally? Had he not been as false to the Court of Versailles as to the Court of Vienna? Had he not played, on a large scale, the same part which, in private life, is played by the vile agent of chicane who sets his neighbours quarrelling, involves them in costly and interminable litigation, and betrays them to each other all round, certain that, whoever may be ruined, he shall be enriched? Surely the true wisdom of the great powers was to attack, not each other, but this common barrator, who, by inflaming the passions of both, by pretending to serve both, and by deserting both, had raised himself above the station to which he was born. The great object of Austria was to regain Silesia; the great object of France was to obtain an accession of territory on the side of Flanders. If they took opposite sides, the result would probably be that, after a war of many years, after the slaughter of many thousands of brave men, after the waste of many millions of crowns, they would lay down their arms without having achieved either object; but, if they came to an understanding, there would be no risk, and no difficulty. Austria would willingly make in Belgium such cessions as France could not expect to obtain by ten pitched battles. Silesia would easily be annexed to the monarchy of which it had long been a part. The union of two such powerful governments would at once overawe the King of Prussia. If he resisted, one short campaign would settle his fate. France and Austria, long accustomed to rise from the game of war both losers, would, for the first time, both be gainers. There could be no room for jealousy between them. The power of both would be increased at once; the

equilibrium between them would be preserved; and the only sufferer would be a mischievous and unprincipled buccaneer, who deserved no tenderness from either.

These doctrines, attractive from their novelty and ingenuity, soon became fashionable at the supper-parties and in the coffeehouses of Paris, and were espoused by every gay marquis and every facetious abbé who was admitted to see Madame de Pompadour's hair curled and powdered. It was not, however, to any political theory that the strange coalition between France and Austria owed its origin. The real motive which induced the great continental powers to forget their old animosities and their old state maxims, was personal aversion to the King of Prussia. This feeling was strongest in Maria Theresa; but it was by no means confined to her. Frederic, in some respects a good master, was emphatically a bad neighbour. That he was hard in all dealings, and quick to take all advantages, was not his most odious fault. His bitter and scoffing speech had inflicted keener wounds than his ambition. In his character of wit he was under less restraint than even in his character of ruler. Satirical verses against all the princes and ministers of Europe were ascribed to his pen. In his letters and conversation he alluded to the greatest potentates of the age in terms which would have better suited Collé, in a war of repartee with young Crébillon at Pelletier's table, than a great sovereign speaking of great sovereigns. About women he was in the habit of expressing himself in a manner which it was impossible for the meekest of women to forgive; and, unfortunately for him, almost the whole Continent was then governed by women who were by no means conspicuous for meekness. Maria Theresa herself had not escaped his scurrilous jests. The Empress Elizabeth of Russia

knew that her gallantries afforded him a favourite theme for ribaldry and invective. Madame de Pompadour, who was really the head of the French government, had been even more keenly galled. She had attempted, by the most delicate flattery, to propitiate the King of Prussia; but her messages had drawn from him only dry and sarcastic replies. The Empress Queen took a very different course. Though the haughtiest of princesses, though the most austere of matrons, she forgot in her thirst for revenge both the dignity of her race and the purity of her character, and condescended to flatter the lowborn and low-minded concubine, who, having acquired influence by prostituting herself, retained it by prostituting others. Maria Theresa actually wrote with her own hand a note, full of expressions of esteem and friendship, to her dear cousin, the daughter of the butcher Poisson, the wife of the publican D'Etioles, the kidnapper of young girls for the haram of an old rake, a strange cousin for the descendant of so many Emperors of the West! The mistress was completely gained over, and easily carried her point with Lewis, who had, indeed, wrongs of his own to resent. His feelings were not quick; but contempt, says the eastern proverb, pierces even through the shell of the tortoise; and neither prudence nor decorum had ever restrained Frederic from expressing his measureless contempt for the sloth, the imbecility, and the baseness of Lewis. France was thus induced to join the coalition; and the example of France determined the conduct of Sweden, then completely subject to French influence.

The enemies of Frederic were surely strong enough to attack him openly; but they were desirous to add to all their other advantages the advantage of a surprise. He was not, however, a man to be taken off his guard. He had tools in

every court; and he now received from Vienna, from Dresden, and from Paris, accounts so circumstantial and so consistent, that he could not doubt of his danger. He learnt, that he was to be assailed at once by France, Austria, Russia, Saxony, Sweden, and the Germanic body; that the greater part of his dominions was to be portioned out among his enemies; that France, which from her geographical position could not directly share in his spoils, was to receive an equivalent in the Netherlands; that Austria was to have Silesia, and the Czarina East Prussia; that Augustus of Saxony expected Magdeburg; and that Sweden would be rewarded with part of Pomerania. If these designs succeeded, the House of Brandenburg would at once sink in the European system to a place lower than that of the Duke of Wurtemburg or the Margrave of Baden.

And what hope was there that these designs would fail? No such union of the continental powers had been seen for ages. A less formidable confederacy had in a week conquered all the provinces of Venice, when Venice was at the height of power, wealth, and glory. A less formidable confederacy had compelled Lewis the Fourteenth to bow down his haughty head to the very earth. A less formidable confederacy has, within our own memory, subjugated a still mightier empire, and abased a still prouder name. Such odds had never been heard of in war. The people whom Frederic ruled were not five millions. The population of the countries which were leagued against him amounted to a hundred millions. The disproportion in wealth was at least equally great. Small communities, actuated by strong sentiments of patriotism or loyalty, have sometimes made head against great monarchies weakened by factions and discontents. But small as was Frederic's kingdom, it probably contained a

greater number of disaffected subjects than were to be found in all the states of his enemies. Silesia formed a fourth part of his dominions; and from the Silesians, born under Austrian princes, the utmost that he could expect was apathy. From the Silesian Catholics he could hardly expect any thing but resistance.

Some states have been enabled, by their geographical position, to defend themselves with advantage against immense force. The sea has repeatedly protected England against the fury of the whole Continent. The Venetian government, driven from its possessions on the land, could still bid defiance to the confederates of Cambray from the Arsenal amidst the lagoons. More than one great and well appointed army, which regarded the shepherds of Switzerland as an easy prey, has perished in the passes of the Alps. Frederic had no such advantage. The form of his states, their situation, the nature of the ground, all were against him. His long, scattered, straggling territory, seemed to have been shaped with an express view to the convenience of invaders, and was protected by no sea, by no chain of hills. Scarcely any corner of it was a week's march from the territory of the enemy. The capital itself, in the event of war, would be constantly exposed to insult. In truth there was hardly a politician or a soldier in Europe who doubted that the conflict would be terminated in a very few days by the prostration of the House of Brandenburg.

Nor was Frederic's own opinion very different. He anticipated nothing short of his own ruin, and of the ruin of his family. Yet there was still a chance, a slender chance, of escape. His states had at least the advantage of a central position; his enemies were widely separated from each other, and could not conveniently unite their overwhelming forces on

one point. They inhabited different climates, and it was probable that the season of the year which would be best suited to the military operations of one portion of the league, would be unfavourable to those of another portion. The Prussian monarchy, too, was free from some infirmities which were found in empires far more extensive and magnificent. Its effective strength for a desperate struggle was not to be measured merely by the number of square miles or the number of people. In that spare but well-knit and well-exercised body, there was nothing but sinew, and muscle, and bone. No public creditors looked for dividends. No distant colonies required defence. No court, filled with flatterers and mistresses, devoured the pay of fifty battalions. The Prussian army, though far inferior in number to the troops which were about to be opposed to it, was yet strong out of all proportion to the extent of the Prussian dominions. It was also admirably trained and admirably officered, accustomed to obey and accustomed to conquer. The revenue was not only unincumbered by debt, but exceeded the ordinary outlay in time of peace. Alone of all the European princes, Frederic had a treasure laid up for a day of difficulty. Above all, he was one, and his enemies were many. In their camps would certainly be found the jealousy, the dissension, the slackness inseparable from coalitions; on his side was the energy, the unity, the secrecy of a strong dictatorship. To a certain extent the deficiency of military means might be supplied by the resources of military art. Small as the King's army was, when compared with the six hundred thousand men whom the confederates could bring into the field, celerity of movement might in some degree compensate for deficiency of bulk. It was thus just possible that genius, judgment, resolution, and good luck united, might protract the

struggle during a campaign or two; and to gain even a month was of importance. It could not be long before the vices which are found in all extensive confederacies would begin to show themselves. Every member of the league would think his own share of the war too large, and his own share of the spoils too small. Complaints and recriminations would abound. The Turk might stir on the Danube; the statesmen of France might discover the error which they had committed in abandoning the fundamental principles of their national policy. Above all, death might rid Prussia of its most formidable enemies. The war was the effect of the personal aversion with which three or four sovereigns regarded Frederic; and the decease of any one of those sovereigns might produce a complete revolution in the state of Europe.

In the midst of a horizon generally dark and stormy, Frederic could discern one bright spot. The peace which had been concluded between England and France in 1748, had been in Europe no more than an armistice; and had not even been an armistice in the other quarters of the globe. In India the sovereignty of the Carnatic was disputed between two great Mussulman houses; Fort Saint George had taken one side, Pondicherry the other; and in a series of battles and sieges the troops of Lawrence and Clive had been opposed to those of Dupleix. A struggle less important in its consequences, but not less likely to produce irritation, was carried on between those French and English adventurers, who kidnapped negroes and collected gold dust on the coast of Guinea. But it was in North America that the emulation and mutual aversion of the two nations were most conspicuous. The French attempted to hem in the English colonists by a chain of military posts, extending from the Great Lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi. The English took arms. The

wild aboriginal tribes appeared on each side mingled with the Pale Faces. Battles were fought; forts were stormed; and hideous stories about stakes, scalpings, and death-songs reached Europe, and inflamed that national animosity which the rivalry of ages had produced. The disputes between France and England came to a crisis at the very time when the tempest which had been gathering was about to burst on Prussia. The tastes and interests of Frederic would have led him, if he had been allowed an option, to side with the house of Bourbon. But the folly of the Court of Versailles left him no choice. France became the tool of Austria; and Frederic was forced to become the ally of England. He could not, indeed, expect that a power which covered the sea with its fleets, and which had to make war at once on the Ohio and the Ganges, would be able to spare a large number of troops for operations in Germany. But England, though poor compared with the England of our time, was far richer than any country on the Continent. The amount of her revenue, and the resources which she found in her credit, though they may be thought small by a generation which has seen her raise a hundred and thirty millions in a single year, appeared miraculous to the politicians of that age. A very moderate portion of her wealth, expended by an able and economical prince, in a country where prices were low, would be sufficient to equip and maintain a formidable army.

Such was the situation in which Frederic found himself. He saw the whole extent of his peril. He saw that there was still a faint possibility of escape; and, with prudent temerity, he determined to strike the first blow. It was in the month of August 1756, that the great war of the Seven Years commenced. The King demanded of the Empress Queen a distinct explanation of her intentions, and plainly told

her that he should consider a refusal as a declaration of war. "I want," he said, "no answer in the style of an oracle." He received an answer at once haughty and evasive. In an instant the rich electorate of Saxony was overflowed by sixty thousand Prussian troops. Augustus with his army occupied a strong position at Pirna. The Queen of Poland was at Dresden. In a few days Pirna was blockaded and Dresden was taken. The first object of Frederic was to obtain possession of the Saxon State Papers; for those papers, he well knew, contained ample proofs that, though apparently an aggressor, he was really acting in self-defence. The Queen of Poland, as well acquainted as Frederic with the importance of those documents, had packed them up, had concealed them in her bed-chamber, and was about to send them off to Warsaw, when a Prussian officer made his appearance. In the hope that no soldier would venture to outrage a lady, a queen, the daughter of an emperor, the mother-in-law of a dauphin, she placed herself before the trunk, and at length sat down on it. But all resistance was vain. The papers were carried to Frederic, who found in them, as he expected, abundant evidence of the designs of the coalition. The most important documents were instantly published, and the effect of the publication was great. It was clear that, of whatever sins the King of Prussia might formerly have been guilty, he was now the injured party, and had merely anticipated a blow intended to destroy him.

The Saxon camp at Pirna was in the meantime closely invested; but the besieged were not without hopes of succour. A great Austrian army under Marshal Brown was about to pour through the passes which separate Bohemia from Saxony. Frederic left at Pirna a force sufficient to deal with the Saxons,

hastened into Bohemia, encountered Brown at Lowositz, and defeated him. This battle decided the fate of Saxony. Augustus and his favourite Bruhl fled to Poland. The whole army of the electorate capitulated. From that time till the end of the war, Frederic treated Saxony as a part of his dominions, or, rather, he acted towards the Saxons in a manner which may serve to illustrate the whole meaning of that tremendous sentence, "subjectos tanquam suos, viles tanquam alienos." Saxony was as much in his power as Brandenburg; and he had no such interest in the welfare of Saxony as he had in the welfare of Brandenburg. He accordingly levied troops and exacted contributions throughout the enslaved province, with far more rigour than in any part of his own dominions. Seventeen thousand men who had been in the camp at Pirna were half compelled, half persuaded to enlist under their conqueror. Thus, within a few weeks from the commencement of hostilities, one of the confederates had been disarmed, and his weapons were now pointed against the rest.

The winter put a stop to military operations. All had hitherto gone well. But the real tug of war was still to come. It was easy to foresee that the year 1757 would be a memorable era in the history of Europe.

The King's scheme for the campaign was simple, bold, and judicious. The Duke of Cumberland with an English and Hanoverian army was in Western Germany, and might be able to prevent the French troops from attacking Prussia. The Russians, confined by their snows, would probably not stir till the spring was far advanced. Saxony was prostrated. Sweden could do nothing very important. During a few months Frederic would have to deal with Austria alone. Even thus the odds were against

him. But ability and courage have often triumphed against odds still more formidable.

Early in 1757 the Prussian army in Saxony began to move. Through four defiles in the mountains they came pouring into Bohemia, Prague was the King's first mark; but the ulterior object was probably Vienna. At Prague lay Marshal Brown with one great army. Daun, the most cautious and fortunate of the Austrian captains, was advancing with another. Frederic determined to overwhelm Brown before Daun should arrive. On the sixth of May was fought, under those walls which, a hundred and thirty years before, had witnessed the victory of the Catholic league and the flight of the unhappy Palatine, a battle more bloody than any which Europe saw during the long interval between Malplaquet and Eylau. The King and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick were distinguished on that day by their valour and exertions. But the chief glory was with Schwerin. When the Prussian infantry wavered, the stout old marshal snatched the colours from an ensign, and, waving them in the air, led back his regiment to the charge. Thus at seventy-two years of age he fell in the thickest battle, still grasping the standard which bears the black eagle on the field argent. The victory remained with the King; but it had been dearly purchased. Whole columns of his bravest warriors had fallen. He admitted that he had lost eighteen thousand men. Of the enemy, twenty-four thousand had been killed, wounded, or taken.

Part of the defeated army was shut up in Prague. Part fled to join the troops which, under the command of Daun, were now close at hand. Frederic determined to play over the same game which had succeeded at Lowositz. He left a large force to besiege Prague, and at the head of thirty thousand

men he marched against Daun. The cautious Marshal, though he had a great superiority in numbers, would risk nothing. He occupied at Kolin a position almost impregnable, and awaited the attack of the King.

It was the eighteenth of June, a day which, if the Greek superstition still retained its influence, would be held sacred to Nemesis, a day on which the two greatest princes of modern times were taught, by a terrible experience, that neither skill nor valour can fix the inconstancy of fortune. The battle began before noon; and part of the Prussian army maintained the contest till after the midsummer sun had gone down. But at length the King found that his troops, having been repeatedly driven back with frightful carnage, could no longer be led to the charge. He was with difficulty persuaded to quit the field. The officers of his personal staff were under the necessity of expostulating with him, and one of them took the liberty to say, "Does your Majesty mean to storm the batteries alone?" Thirteen thousand of his bravest fellows had perished. Nothing remained for him but to retreat in good order, to raise the siege of Prague, and to hurry his army by different routes out of Bohemia.

This stroke seemed to be final. Frederic's situation had at best been such, that only an uninterrupted run of good luck could save him, as it seemed, from ruin. And now, almost in the outset of the contest, he had met with a check which, even in a war between equal powers, would have been felt as serious. He had owed much to the opinion which all Europe entertained of his army. Since his accession, his soldiers had in many successive battles been victorious over the Austrians. But the glory had departed from his arms. All whom his malevolent sarcasms had wounded, made haste to avenge

themselves by scoffing at the scoffer. His soldiers had ceased to confide in his star. In every part of his camp his dispositions were severely criticised. Even in his own family he had detractors. His next brother, William, heir-presumptive, or rather, in truth, heir-apparent to the throne, and great-grandfather of the present king, could not refrain from lamenting his own fate and that of the house of Hohenzollern, once so great and so prosperous, but now, by the rash ambition of its chief, made a by-word to all nations. These complaints, and some blunders which William committed during the retreat from Bohemia, called forth the bitter displeasure of the inexorable King. The prince's heart was broken by the cutting reproaches of his brother; he quitted the army, retired to a country seat, and in a short time died of shame and vexation.

It seemed that the King's distress could hardly be increased. Yet at this moment another blow not less terrible than that of Kolin fell upon him. The French under Marshal d'Estrées had invaded Germany. The Duke of Cumberland had given them battle at Hastenbeck, and had been defeated. In order to save the Electorate of Hanover from entire subjugation, he had made, at Closter Seven, an arrangement with the French Generals, which left them at liberty to turn their arms against the Prussian dominions.

That nothing might be wanting to Frederic's distress, he lost his mother just at this time; and he appears to have felt the loss more than was to be expected from the hardness and severity of his character. In truth, his misfortunes had now cut to the quick. The mocker, the tyrant, the most rigorous, the most imperious, the most cynical of men, was very unhappy. His face was so haggard and his form so thin, that when on his return from Bohemia he passed through Leipsic, the people hardly knew

him again. His sleep was broken; the tears, in spite of himself, often started into his eyes; and the grave began to present itself to his agitated mind as the best refuge from misery and dishonour. His resolution was fixed never to be taken alive, and never to make peace on condition of descending from his place among the powers of Europe. He saw nothing left for him except to die; and he deliberately chose his mode of death. He always carried about with him a sure and speedy poison in a small glass case; and to the few in whom he placed confidence, he made no mystery of his resolution.

But we should very imperfectly describe the state of Frederic's mind, if we left out of view the laughable peculiarities which contrasted so singularly with the gravity, energy, and harshness of his character. It is difficult to say whether the tragic or the comic predominated in the strange scene which was then acting. In the midst of all the great King's calamities, his passion for writing indifferent poetry grew stronger and stronger. Enemies all round him, despair in his heart, pills of corrosive sublimate hidden in his clothes, he poured forth hundreds upon hundreds of lines, hateful to gods and men, the insipid dregs of Voltaire's Hippocrene, the faint echo of the lyre of Chaulieu. It is amusing to compare what he did during the last months of 1757, with what he wrote during the same time. It may be doubted whether any equal portion of the life of Hannibal, of Cæsar, or of Napoleon, will bear a comparison with that short period, the most brilliant in the history of Prussia and of Frederic. Yet at this very time the scanty leisure of the illustrious warrior was employed in producing odes and epistles, a little better than Cibber's, and a little worse than Hayley's. Here and there a manly sentiment which deserves to

be in prose makes its appearance in company with Prometheus and Orpheus, Elysium and Acheron, the plaintive Philomel, the poppies of Morpheus, and all the other frippery which, like a robe tossed by a proud beauty to her waiting-woman, has long been contemptuously abandoned by genius to mediocrity. We hardly know any instance of the strength and weakness of human nature so striking, and so grotesque, as the character of this haughty, vigilant, resolute, sagacious blue-stocking, half Mithridates and half Trissotin, bearing up against a world in arms, with an ounce of poison in one pocket and a quire of bad verses in the other.

Frederic had some time before made advances towards a reconciliation with Voltaire; and some civil letters had passed between them. After the battle of Kolin their epistolary intercourse became, at least in seeming, friendly and confidential. We do not know any collection of Letters which throws so much light on the darkest and most intricate parts of human nature, as the correspondence of these strange beings after they had exchanged forgiveness. Both felt that the quarrel had lowered them in the public estimation. They admired each other. They stood in need of each other. The great King wished to be handed down to posterity by the great Writer. The great Writer felt himself exalted by the homage of the great King. Yet the wounds which they had inflicted on each other were too deep to be effaced, or even perfectly healed. Not only did the scars remain; the sore places often festered and bled afresh. The letters consisted for the most part of compliments, thanks, offers of service, assurances of attachment. But if any thing brought back to Frederic's recollection the cunning and mischievous pranks by which Voltaire had provoked him, some expression of contempt and displeasure broke forth

in the midst of eulogy. It was much worse when any thing recalled to the mind of Voltaire the outrages which he and his kinswoman had suffered at Frankfort, All at once his flowing panegyric was turned into invective. "Remember how you behaved to me. For your sake I have lost the favour of my native king. For your sake I am an exile from my country. I loved you. I trusted myself to you. I had no wish but to end my life in your service. And what was my reward? Stripped of all that you had bestowed on me, the key, the order, the pension, I was forced to fly from your territories. I was hunted as if I had been a deserter from your grenadiers. I was arrested, insulted, plundered. My niece was dragged through the mud of Frankfort by your soldiers, as if she had been some wretched follower of your camp. You have great talents. You have good qualities. But you have one odious vice. You delight in the abasement of your fellow creatures. You have brought disgrace on the name of philosopher. You have given some colour to the slanders of the bigots, who say that no confidence can be placed in the justice or humanity of those who reject the Christian faith." Then the King answers, with less heat but equal severity—"You know that you behaved shamefully in Prussia. It was well for you that you had to deal with a man so indulgent to the infirmities of genius as I am. You richly deserved to see the inside of a dungeon. Your talents are not more widely known than your faithlessness and your malevolence. The grave itself is no asylum from your spite. Maupertuis is dead; but you still go on calumniating and deriding him, as if you had not made him miserable enough while he was living. Let us have no more of this. And, above all, let me hear no more of your niece. I am sick to death of her name. I can bear with your faults for the sake

of your merits; but she has not written Mahomet or Merope."

An explosion of this kind, it might be supposed, would necessarily put an end to all amicable communication. But it was not so. After every outbreak of ill humour this extraordinary pair became more loving than before, and exchanged compliments and assurances of mutual regard with a wonderful air of sincerity.

It may well be supposed that men who wrote thus to each other, were not very guarded in what they said of each other. The English ambassador, Mitchell, who knew that the King of Prussia was constantly writing to Voltaire with the greatest freedom on the most important subjects, was amazed to hear his Majesty designate this highly favoured correspondent as a bad-hearted fellow, the greatest rascal on the face of the earth. And the language which the poet held about the King was not much more respectful.

It would probably have puzzled Voltaire himself to say what was his real feeling towards Frederic. It was compounded of all sentiments, from enmity to friendship, and from scorn to admiration; and the proportions in which these elements were mixed, changed every moment. The old patriarch resembled the spoiled child who screams, stamps, cuffs, laughs, kisses, and cuddles within one quarter of an hour. His resentment was not extinguished; yet he was not without sympathy for his old friend. As a Frenchman he wished success to the arms of his country. As a philosopher, he was anxious for the stability of a throne on which a philosopher sat. He longed both to save and to humble Frederic. There was one way, and only one, in which all his conflicting feelings could at once be gratified. If Frederic were preserved by the interference of France, if it

were known that for that interference he was indebted to the mediation of Voltaire, this would indeed be delicious revenge; this would indeed be to heap coals of fire on that haughty head. Nor did the vain and restless poet think it impossible that he might, from his hermitage near the Alps, dictate peace to Europe. D'Estrées had quitted Hanover, and the command of the French army had been entrusted to the Duke of Richelieu, a man whose chief distinction was derived from his success in gallantry. Richelieu was in truth the most eminent of that race of seducers by profession, who furnished Crébillon the younger and La Clos with models for their heroes. In his earlier days the royal house itself had not been secure from his presumptuous love. He was believed to have carried his conquests into the family of Orleans; and some suspected that he was not unconcerned in the mysterious remorse which embittered the last hours of the charming mother of Lewis the Fifteenth. But the Duke was now sixty years old. With a heart deeply corrupted by vice, a head long accustomed to think only on trifles, an impaired constitution, an impaired fortune, and, worst of all, a very red nose, he was entering on a dull, frivolous, and unrespected old age. Without one qualification for military command, except that personal courage which was common between him and the whole nobility of France, he had been placed at the head of the army of Hanover; and in that situation he did his best to repair, by extortion and corruption, the injury which he had done to his property by a life of dissolute profusion.

The Duke of Richelieu to the end of his life hated the philosophers as a sect, not for those parts of their system which a good and wise man would have condemned, but for their virtues, for their spirit of free inquiry, and for their hatred of those social abuses of

which he was himself the personification. But he, like many of those who thought with him, excepted Voltaire from the list of proscribed writers. He frequently sent flattering letters to Ferney. He did the patriarch the honour to borrow money of him, and even carried this condescending friendship so far as to forget to pay the interest. Voltaire thought that it might be in his power to bring the Duke and the King of Prussia into communication with each other. He wrote earnestly to both; and he so far succeeded that a correspondence between them was commenced.

But it was to very different means that Frederic was to owe his deliverance. At the beginning of November, the net seemed to have closed completely round him. The Russians were in the field, and were spreading devastation through his eastern provinces. Silesia was overrun by the Austrians. A great French army was advancing from the west under the command of Marshal Soubise, a prince of the great Armorican house of Rohan. Berlin itself had been taken and plundered by the Croatians. Such was the situation from which Frederic extricated himself, with dazzling glory, in the short space of thirty days.

He marched first against Soubise. On the fifth of November the armies met at Rosbach. The French were two to one; but they were ill disciplined, and their general was a dunce. The tactics of Frederic, and the well-regulated valour of the Prussian troops, obtained a complete victory. Seven thousand of the invaders were made prisoners. Their guns, their colours, their baggage, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Those who escaped fled as confusedly as a mob scattered by cavalry. Victorious in the West, the King turned his arms towards Silesia. In that quarter every thing seemed to be lost. Breslau

had fallen; and Charles of Loraine, with a mighty power, held the whole province. On the fifth of December, exactly one month after the battle of Rosbach, Frederic, with forty thousand men, and Prince Charles, at the head of not less than sixty thousand, met at Leuthen, hard by Breslau. The King, who was, in general, perhaps too much inclined to consider the common soldier as a mere machine, resorted, on this great day, to means resembling those which Buonaparte afterwards employed with such signal success for the purpose of stimulating military enthusiasm. The principal officers were convoked. Frederic addressed them with great force and pathos; and directed them to speak to their men as he had spoken to them. When the armies were set in battle array, the Prussian troops were in a state of fierce excitement; but their excitement showed itself after the fashion of a grave people. The columns advanced to the attack chanting, to the sound of drums and fifes, the rude hymns of the old Saxon Sternholds. They had never fought so well; nor had the genius of their chief ever been so conspicuous. "That battle," said Napoleon, "was a masterpiece. Of itself it is sufficient to entitle Frederic to a place in the first rank among generals." The victory was complete. Twenty-seven thousand Austrians were killed, wounded, or taken; fifty stand of colours, a hundred guns, four thousand waggons, fell into the hands of the Prussians. Breslau opened its gates; Silesia was reconquered; Charles of Loraine retired to hide his shame and sorrow at Brussels; and Frederic allowed his troops to take some repose in winter quarters, after a campaign, to the vicissitudes of which it will be difficult to find any parallel in ancient or modern history.

The King's fame filled all the world. He had, during the last year, maintained a contest, on terms

of advantage, against three powers, the weakest of which had more than three times his resources. He had fought four great pitched battles against superior forces. Three of these battles he had gained; and the defeat of Kolin, repaired as it had been, rather raised than lowered his military renown. The victory of Leuthen is, to this day, the proudest on the roll of Prussian fame. Leipsic, indeed, and Waterloo, produced consequences more important to mankind. But the glory of Leipsic must be shared by the Prussians with the Austrians and Russians; and at Waterloo the British infantry bore the burden and heat of the day. The victory of Rosbach was, in a military point of view, less honourable than that of Leuthen; for it was gained over an incapable general and a disorganized army; but the moral effect which it produced was immense. All the preceding triumphs of Frederic had been triumphs over Germans, and could excite no emotions of national pride among the German people. It was impossible that a Hessian or a Hanoverian could feel any patriotic exultation at hearing that Pomeranians had slaughtered Moravians, or that Saxon banners had been hung in the churches of Berlin. Indeed, though the military character of the Germans justly stood high throughout the world, they could boast of no great day which belonged to them as a people; of no Agincourt, of no Bannockburn. Most of their victories had been gained over each other; and their most splendid exploits against foreigners had been achieved under the command of Eugene, who was himself a foreigner. The news of the battle of Rosbach stirred the blood of the whole of the mighty population from the Alps to the Baltic, and from the borders of Courland to those of Loraine. Westphalia and Lower Saxony had been deluged by a great host of strangers, whose speech was unintelligible, and

whose petulant and licentious manners had excited the strongest feelings of disgust and hatred. That great host had been put to flight by a small band of German warriors, led by a prince of German blood on the side of father and mother, and marked by the fair hair and the clear blue eye of Germany. Never since the dissolution of the empire of Charlemagne, had the Teutonic race won such a field against the French. The tidings called forth a general burst of delight and pride from the whole of the great family which spoke the various dialects of the ancient language of Arminius. The fame of Frederic began to supply, in some degree, the place of a common government and of a common capital. It became a rallying point for all true Germans, a subject of mutual congratulation to the Bavarian and the Westphalian, to the citizen of Frankfort and the citizen of Nuremburg. Then first it was manifest that the Germans were truly a nation. Then first was discernible that patriotic spirit which, in 1813, achieved the great deliverance of central Europe, and which still guards, and long will guard, against foreign ambition the old freedom of the Rhine.

Nor were the effects produced by that celebrated day merely political. The greatest masters of German poetry and eloquence have admitted that, though the great King neither valued nor understood his native language, though he looked on France as the only seat of taste and philosophy, yet, in his own despite, he did much to emancipate the genius of his countrymen from the foreign yoke; and that, in the act of vanquishing Soubise, he was, unintentionally, rousing the spirit which soon began to question the literary precedence of Boileau and Voltaire. So strangely do events confound all the plans of man. A prince who read only French, who wrote only French, who aspired to rank as a French classic, became, quite uncon-

sciously, the means of liberating half the Continent from the dominion of that French criticism of which he was himself, to the end of his life, a slave. Yet even the enthusiasm of Germany in favour of Frederic hardly equalled the enthusiasm of England. The birthday of our ally was celebrated with as much enthusiasm as that of our own sovereign; and at night the streets of London were in a blaze with illuminations. Portraits of the Hero of Rosbach, with his cocked hat and long pigtail, were in every house. An attentive observer will, at this day, find in the parlours of old-fashioned inns, and in the portfolios of print-sellers, twenty portraits of Frederic for one of George the Second. The sign-painters were every where employed in touching up Admiral Vernon into the King of Prussia. This enthusiasm was strong among religious people, and especially among the Methodists, who knew that the French and Austrians were Papists, and supposed Frederic to be the Joshua or Gideon of the Reformed Faith. One of Whitfield's hearers, on the day on which thanks for the battle of Leuthen were returned at the Tabernacle, made the following exquisitely ludicrous entry in a diary, part of which has come down to us: "The Lord stirred up the King of Prussia and his soldiers to pray. They kept three fast days, and spent about an hour praying and singing psalms before they engaged the enemy. O! how good it is to pray and fight!" Some young Englishmen of rank proposed to visit Germany as volunteers, for the purpose of learning the art of war under the greatest of commanders. This last proof of British attachment and admiration, Frederic politely but firmly declined. His camp was no place for amateur students of military science. The Prussian discipline was rigorous even to cruelty. The officers, while in the field, were expected to practise an abstemiousness and self-denial such as

was hardly surpassed by the most rigid monastic orders. However noble their birth, however high their rank in the service, they were not permitted to eat from any thing better than pewter. It was a high crime even in a count and field-marshal to have a single silver spoon among his baggage. Gay young Englishmen of twenty thousand a year, accustomed to liberty and to luxury, would not easily submit to these Spartan restraints. The King could not venture to keep them in order as he kept his own subjects in order. Situated as he was with respect to England, he could not well imprison or shoot refractory Howards and Cavendishes. On the other hand, the example of a few fine gentlemen, attended by chariots and livery servants, eating in plate, and drinking Champagne and Tokay, was enough to corrupt his whole army. He thought it best to make a stand at first, and civilly refuse to admit such dangerous companions among his troops.

The help of England was bestowed in a manner far more useful and more acceptable. An annual subsidy of near seven hundred thousand pounds enabled the King to add probably more than fifty thousand men to his army. Pitt, now at the height of power and popularity, undertook the task of defending Western Germany against France, and asked Frederic only for the loan of a general. The general selected was Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had attained high distinction in the Prussian service. He was put at the head of an army, partly English, partly Hanoverian, partly composed of mercenaries hired from the petty princes of the empire. He soon vindicated the choice of the two allied courts, and proved himself the second general of the age.

Frederic passed the winter at Breslau, in reading, writing, and preparing for the next campaign. The havoc which the war had made among his troops was

rapidly repaired; and in the spring of 1758 he was again ready for the conflict. Prince Ferdinand kept the French in check. The King in the meantime, after attempting against the Austrians some operations which led to no very important result, marched to encounter the Russians, who, slaying, burning, and wasting wherever they turned, had penetrated into the heart of his realm. He gave them battle at Zorndorf, near Frankfort on the Oder. The fight was long and bloody. Quarter was neither given nor taken; for the Germans and Scythians regarded each other with bitter aversion, and the sight of the ravages committed by the half savage invaders had incensed the King and his army. The Russians were overthrown with great slaughter; and for a few months no further danger was to be apprehended from the east.

A day of thanksgiving was proclaimed by the King, and was celebrated with pride and delight by his people. The rejoicings in England were not less enthusiastic or less sincere. This may be selected as the point of time at which the military glory of Frederic reached the zenith. In the short space of three quarters of a year he had won three great battles over the armies of three mighty and warlike monarchies, France, Austria, and Russia.

But it was decreed that the temper of that strong mind should be tried by both extremes of fortune in rapid succession. Close upon this series of triumphs came a series of disasters, such as would have blighted the fame and broken the heart of almost any other commander. Yet Frederic, in the midst of his calamities, was still an object of admiration to his subjects, his allies, and his enemies. Overwhelmed by adversity, sick of life, he still maintained the contest, greater in defeat, in flight, and in what seemed hopeless ruin, than on the fields of his proudest victories.

Having vanquished the Russians, he hastened into Saxony to oppose the troops of the Empress Queen, commanded by Daun, the most cautious, and Laudohn, the most inventive and enterprising of her generals. These two celebrated commanders agreed on a scheme, in which the prudence of the one and the vigour of the other seem to have been happily combined. At dead of night they surprised the King in his camp at Hochkirchen. His presence of mind saved his troops from destruction; but nothing could save them from defeat and severe loss. Marshal Keith was among the slain. The first roar of the guns roused the noble exile from his rest, and he was instantly in the front of the battle. He received a dangerous wound, but refused to quit the field, and was in the act of rallying his broken troops, when an Austrian bullet terminated his chequered and eventful life.

The misfortune was serious. But of all generals Frederic understood best how to repair defeat, and Daun understood least how to improve victory. In a few days the Prussian army was as formidable as before the battle. The prospect was, however, gloomy. An Austrian army under General Harsch had invaded Silesia, and invested the fortress of Neisse. Daun, after his success at Hochkirchen, had written to Harsch in very confident terms:—"Go on with your operations against Neisse. Be quite at ease as to the King. I will give a good account of him." In truth, the position of the Prussians was full of difficulties. Between them and Silesia lay the victorious army of Daun. It was not easy for them to reach Silesia at all. If they did reach it, they left Saxony exposed to the Austrians. But the vigour and activity of Frederic surmounted every obstacle. He made a circuitous march of extraordinary rapidity, passed Daun, hastened into Silesia, raised the siege

of Neisse, and drove Harsch into Bohemia. Daun availed himself of the King's absence to attack Dresden. The Prussians defended it desperately. The inhabitants of that wealthy and polished capital begged in vain for mercy from the garrison within, and from the besiegers without. The beautiful suburbs were burned to the ground. It was clear that the town, if won at all, would be won street by street by the bayonet. At this conjuncture came news, that Frederic, having cleared Silesia of his enemies, was returning by forced marches into Saxony. Daun retired from before Dresden, and fell back into the Austrian territories. The King, over heaps of ruins, made his triumphant entry into the unhappy metropolis, which had so cruelly expiated the weak and perfidious policy of its sovereign. It was now the 20th of November. The cold weather suspended military operations; and the King again took up his winter quarters at Breslau.

The third of the seven terrible years was over; and Frederic still stood his ground. He had been recently tried by domestic as well as by military disasters. On the 14th of October, the day on which he was defeated at Hochkirchen, the day on the anniversary of which, forty-eight years later, a defeat far more tremendous laid the Prussian monarchy in the dust, died Wilhelmina, Margravine of Bareuth. From the accounts which we have of her, by her own hand, and by the hands of the most discerning of her contemporaries, we should pronounce her to have been coarse, indelicate, and a good hater, but not destitute of kind and generous feelings. Her mind, naturally strong and observant, had been highly cultivated; and she was, and deserved to be, Frederic's favourite sister. He felt the loss as much as it was in his iron nature to feel the loss of any thing but a province or a battle.

At Breslau, during the winter, he was indefatigable in his poetical labours. The most spirited lines, perhaps, that he ever wrote, are to be found in a bitter lampoon on Lewis and Madame de Pompadour, which he composed at this time, and sent to Voltaire. The verses were, indeed, so good, that Voltaire was afraid that he might himself be suspected of having written them, or at least of having corrected them; and partly from fright, partly, we fear, from love of mischief, sent them to the Duke of Choiseul, then prime minister of France. Choiseul very wisely determined to encounter Frederic at Frederic's own weapons, and applied for assistance to Palissot, who had some skill as a versifier, and some little talent for satire. Palissot produced some very stinging lines on the moral and literary character of Frederic, and these lines the Duke sent to Voltaire. This war of couplets, following close on the carnage of Zorndorf and the conflagration of Dresden, illustrates well the strangely compounded character of the King of Prussia.

At this moment he was assailed by a new enemy. Benedict the Fourteenth, the best and wisest of the two hundred and fifty successors of St. Peter, was no more. During the short interval between his reign and that of his disciple Ganganelli, the chief seat in the Church of Rome was filled by Rezzonico, who took the name of Clement the Thirteenth. This absurd priest determined to try what the weight of his authority could effect in favour of the orthodox Maria Theresa against a heretic king. At the high mass on Christmas-day, a sword with a rich belt and scabbard, a hat of crimson velvet lined with ermine, and a dove of pearls, the mystic symbol of the Divine Comforter, were solemnly blessed by the supreme pontiff, and were sent with great ceremony to Marshal Daun, the conqueror of Kolin and Hochkirchen. This mark of

favour had more than once been bestowed by the Popes on the great champions of the faith. Similar honours had been paid, more than six centuries earlier, by Urban the Second to Godfrey of Bouillon. Similar honours had been conferred on Alba for destroying the liberties of the Low Countries, and on John Sobiesky after the deliverance of Vienna. But the presents which were received with profound reverence by the Baron of the Holy Sepulchre in the eleventh century, and which had not wholly lost their value even in the seventeenth century, appeared inexpressibly ridiculous to a generation which read Montesquieu and Voltaire. Frederic wrote sarcastic verses on the gifts, the giver, and the receiver. But the public wanted no prompter; and an universal roar of laughter from Petersburg to Lisbon reminded the Vatican that the age of crusades was over.

The fourth campaign, the most disastrous of all the campaigns of this fearful war, had now opened. The Austrians filled Saxony and menaced Berlin. The Russians defeated the King's generals on the Oder, threatened Silesia, effected a junction with Laudohn, and entrenched themselves strongly at Kunersdorf. Frederic hastened to attack them. A great battle was fought. During the earlier part of the day every thing yielded to the impetuosity of the Prussians, and to the skill of their chief. The lines were forced. Half the Russian guns were taken. The King sent off a courier to Berlin with two lines, announcing a complete victory. But in the meantime, the stubborn Russians, defeated yet unbroken, had taken up their stand in an almost impregnable position, on an eminence where the Jews of Frankfort were wont to bury their dead. Here the battle recommenced. The Prussian infantry, exhausted by six hours of hard fighting under a sun which equalled the tropical heat, were yet brought up repeatedly to

the attack, but in vain. The King led three charges in person. Two horses were killed under him. The officers of his staff fell all round him. His coat was pierced by several bullets. All was in vain. His infantry was driven back with frightful slaughter. Terror began to spread fast from man to man. At that moment the fiery cavalry of Laudohn, still fresh, rushed on the wavering ranks. Then followed an universal rout. Frederic himself was on the point of falling into the hands of the conquerors, and was with difficulty saved by a gallant officer, who, at the head of a handful of Hussars, made good a diversion of a few minutes. Shattered in body, shattered in mind, the King reached that night a village which the Cossacks had plundered ; and there, in a ruined and deserted farm-house, flung himself on a heap of straw. He had sent to Berlin a second dispatch very different from his first:—"Let the royal family leave Berlin. Send the archives to Potsdam. The town may make terms with the enemy."

The defeat was, in truth, overwhelming. Of fifty thousand men who had that morning marched under the black eagles, not three thousand remained together. The King bethought him again of his corrosive sublimate, and wrote to bid adieu to his friends, and to give directions as to the measures to be taken in the event of his death.—"I have no resource left" —such is the language of one of his letters—"all is lost. I will not survive the ruin of my country. Farewell for ever."

But the mutual jealousies of the confederates prevented them from following up their victory. They lost a few days in loitering and squabbling ; and a few days, improved by Frederic, were worth more than the years of other men. On the morning after the battle he had got together eighteen thousand of his troops. Very soon his force amounted to thirty

thousand. Guns were procured from the neighbouring fortresses; and there was again an army. Berlin was for the present safe; but calamities came pouring on the King in uninterrupted succession. One of his generals, with a large body of troops, was taken at Maxen; another was defeated at Meissen; and when at length the campaign of 1759 closed, in the midst of a rigorous winter, the situation of Prussia appeared desperate. The only consoling circumstance was, that, in the West, Ferdinand of Brunswick had been more fortunate than his master; and by a series of exploits, of which the battle of Minden was the most glorious, had removed all apprehension of danger on the side of France.

The fifth year was now about to commence. It seemed impossible that the Prussian territories, repeatedly devastated by hundreds of thousands of invaders, could longer support the contest. But the King carried on war as no European power has ever carried on war, except the committee of Public Safety during the great agony of the French Revolution. He governed his kingdom as he would have governed a besieged town, not caring to what extent property was destroyed, or the pursuits of civil life suspended, so that he did but make head against the enemy. As long as there was a man left in Prussia, that man might carry a musket; as long as there was a horse left, that horse might draw artillery. The coin was debased, the civil functionaries were left unpaid; in some provinces civil government altogether ceased to exist. But there were still rye-bread and potatoes; there were still lead and gunpowder; and, while the means of sustaining and destroying life remained, Frederic was determined to fight it out to the very last.

The earlier part of the campaign of 1760 was unfavourable to him. Berlin was again occupied by

the enemy. Great contributions were levied on the inhabitants, and the royal palace was plundered. But at length, after two years of calamity, victory came back to his arms. At Lignitz he gained a great battle over Laudohn; at Torgau, after a day of horrible carnage, he triumphed over Daun. The fifth year closed, and still the event was in suspense. In the countries where the war had raged, the misery and exhaustion were more appalling than ever; but still there were left men and beasts, arms and food, and still Frederic fought on. In truth, he had now been baited into savageness. His heart was ulcerated with hatred. The implacable resentment with which his enemies persecuted him, though originally provoked by his own unprincipled ambition, excited in him a thirst for vengeance which he did not even attempt to conceal. "It is hard," he says, in one of his letters, "for man to bear what I bear. I begin to feel that, as the Italians say, revenge is a pleasure for the gods. My philosophy is worn out by suffering. I am no saint, like those of whom we read in the legends; and I will own that I should die content if only I could first inflict a portion of the misery which I endure."

Borne up by such feelings, he struggled with various success, but constant glory, through the campaign of 1761. On the whole, the result of this campaign was disastrous to Prussia. No great battle was gained by the enemy; but, in spite of the desperate bounds of the hunted tiger, the circle of pursuers was fast closing round him. Laudohn had surprised the important fortress of Schweidnitz. With that fortress, half of Silesia, and the command of the most important defiles through the mountains, had been transferred to the Austrians. The Russians had overpowered the King's generals in Pomerania. The country was so completely desolated

that he began, by his own confession, to look round him with blank despair, unable to imagine where recruits, horses, or provisions were to be found.

Just at this time two great events brought on a complete change in the relations of almost all the powers of Europe. One of those events was the retirement of Mr. Pitt from office; the other was the death of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia.

The retirement of Pitt seemed to be an omen of utter ruin to the House of Brandenburg. His proud and vehement nature was incapable of any thing that looked like either fear or treachery. He had often declared that, while he was in power, England should never make a peace of Utrecht, should never, for any selfish object, abandon an ally even in the last extremity of distress. The Continental war was his own war. He had been bold enough, he who in former times had attacked, with irresistible powers of oratory, the Hanoverian policy of Carteret, and the German subsidies of Newcastle, to declare that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire, and that he would conquer America in Germany. He had fallen; and the power which he had exercised, not always with discretion, but always with vigour and genius, had devolved on a favourite who was the representative of the Tory party, of the party which had thwarted William, which had persecuted Marlborough, and which had given up the Catalans to the vengeance of Philip of Anjou. To make peace with France, to shake off, with all, or more than all, the speed compatible with decency, every Continental connexion, these were among the chief objects of the new Minister. The policy then followed inspired Frederic with an unjust, but deep and bitter aversion to the English name, and produced effects which are still felt throughout the civilized world. To that policy it was owing that, some years later, England

could not find on the whole Continent a single ally to stand by her, in her extreme need, against the House of Bourbon. To that policy it was owing that Frederic, alienated from England, was compelled to connect himself closely, during his later years, with Russia, and was induced to assist in that great crime, the fruitful parent of other great crimes, the first partition of Poland.

Scarcely had the retreat of Mr. Pitt deprived Prussia of her only friend, when the death of Elizabeth produced an entire revolution in the politics of the North. The Grand Duke Peter, her nephew, who now ascended the Russian throne, was not merely free from the prejudices which his aunt had entertained against Frederic, but was a worshipper, a servile imitator of the great King. The days of the new Czar's government were few and evil, but sufficient to produce a change in the whole state of Christendom. He set the Prussian prisoners at liberty, fitted them out decently, and sent them back to their master; he withdrew his troops from the provinces which Elizabeth had decided on incorporating with her dominions; and he absolved all those Prussian subjects, who had been compelled to swear fealty to Russia, from their engagements.

Not content with concluding peace on terms favourable to Prussia, he solicited rank in the Prussian service, dressed himself in a Prussian uniform, wore the Black Eagle of Prussia on his breast, made preparations for visiting Prussia, in order to have an interview with the object of his idolatry, and actually sent fifteen thousand excellent troops to reinforce the shattered army of Frederic. Thus strengthened, the King speedily repaired the losses of the preceding year, reconquered Silesia, defeated Daun at Buckersdorf, invested and retook Schweidnitz, and, at the close of the year, presented to the forces of Maria Theresa

a front as formidable as before the great reverses of 1759. Before the end of the campaign, his friend the Emperor Peter, having, by a series of absurd insults to the institutions, manners, and feelings of his people, united them in hostility to his person and government, was deposed and murdered. The Empress, who, under the title of Catherine the Second, now assumed the supreme power, was, at the commencement of her administration, by no means partial to Frederic, and refused to permit her troops to remain under his command. But she observed the peace made by her husband; and Prussia was no longer threatened by danger from the East.

England and France at the same time paired off together. They concluded a treaty, by which they bound themselves to observe neutrality with respect to the German war. Thus the coalitions on both sides were dissolved; and the original enemies, Austria and Prussia, remained alone confronting each other.

Austria had undoubtedly far greater means than Prussia, and was less exhausted by hostilities; yet it seemed hardly possible that Austria could effect alone what she had in vain attempted to effect when supported by France on the one side, and by Russia on the other. Danger also began to menace the Imperial house from another quarter. The Ottoman Porte held threatening language, and a hundred thousand Turks were mustered on the frontiers of Hungary. The proud and revengeful spirit of the Empress Queen at length gave way; and, in February 1763, the peace of Hubertsburg put an end to the conflict which had, during seven years, devastated Germany. The King ceded nothing. The whole Continent in arms had proved unable to tear Silesia from that iron grasp.

The war was over. Frederic was safe. His glory was beyond the reach of envy. If he had not made conquests as vast as those of Alexander, of

Cæsar, and of Napoleon, if he had not, on fields of battle, enjoyed the constant success of Marlborough and Wellington, he had yet given an example unrivalled in history of what capacity and resolution can effect against the greatest superiority of power and the utmost spite of fortune. He entered Berlin in triumph, after an absence of more than six years. The streets were brilliantly lighted up; and, as he passed along in an open carriage, with Ferdinand of Brunswick at his side, the multitude saluted him with loud praises and blessings. He was moved by those marks of attachment, and repeatedly exclaimed, "Long live my dear people! Long live my children!" Yet, even in the midst of that gay spectacle, he could not but perceive every where the traces of destruction and decay. The city had been more than once plundered. The population had considerably diminished. Berlin, however, had suffered little when compared with most parts of the kingdom. The ruin of private fortunes, the distress of all ranks, was such as might appal the firmest mind. Almost every province had been the seat of war, and of war conducted with merciless ferocity. Clouds of Croatians had descended on Silesia. Tens of thousands of Cossacks had been let loose on Pomerania and Brandenburg. The mere contributions levied by the invaders amounted, it was said, to more than a hundred millions of dollars; and the value of what they extorted was probably much less than the value of what they destroyed. The fields lay uncultivated. The very seed-corn had been devoured in the madness of hunger. Famine, and contagious maladies produced by famine, had swept away the herds and flocks; and there was reason to fear that a great pestilence among the human race was likely to follow in the train of that tremendous war. Near fifteen thousand houses had been burned to the ground. The population of

the kingdom had in seven years decreased to the frightful extent of ten per cent. A sixth of the males capable of bearing arms had actually perished on the field of battle. In some districts, no labourers, except women, were seen in the fields at harvest time. In others, the traveller passed shuddering through a succession of silent villages, in which not a single inhabitant remained. The currency had been debased; the authority of laws and magistrates had been suspended; the whole social system was deranged. For, during that convulsive struggle, every thing that was not military violence was anarchy. Even the army was disorganized. Some great generals, and a crowd of excellent officers had fallen, and it had been impossible to supply their place. The difficulty of finding recruits had, towards the close of the war, been so great, that selection and rejection were impossible. Whole battalions were composed of deserters or of prisoners. It was hardly to be hoped that thirty years of repose and industry would repair the ruin produced by seven years of havoc. One consolatory circumstance, indeed, there was. No debt had been incurred. The burdens of the war had been terrible, almost insupportable; but no arrear was left to embarrass the finances in time of peace.

Here, for the present, we must pause. We have accompanied Frederic to the close of his career as a warrior. Possibly, when these Memoirs are completed, we may resume the consideration of his character, and give some account of his domestic and foreign policy, and of his private habits, during the many years of tranquillity which followed the Seven Years' War.

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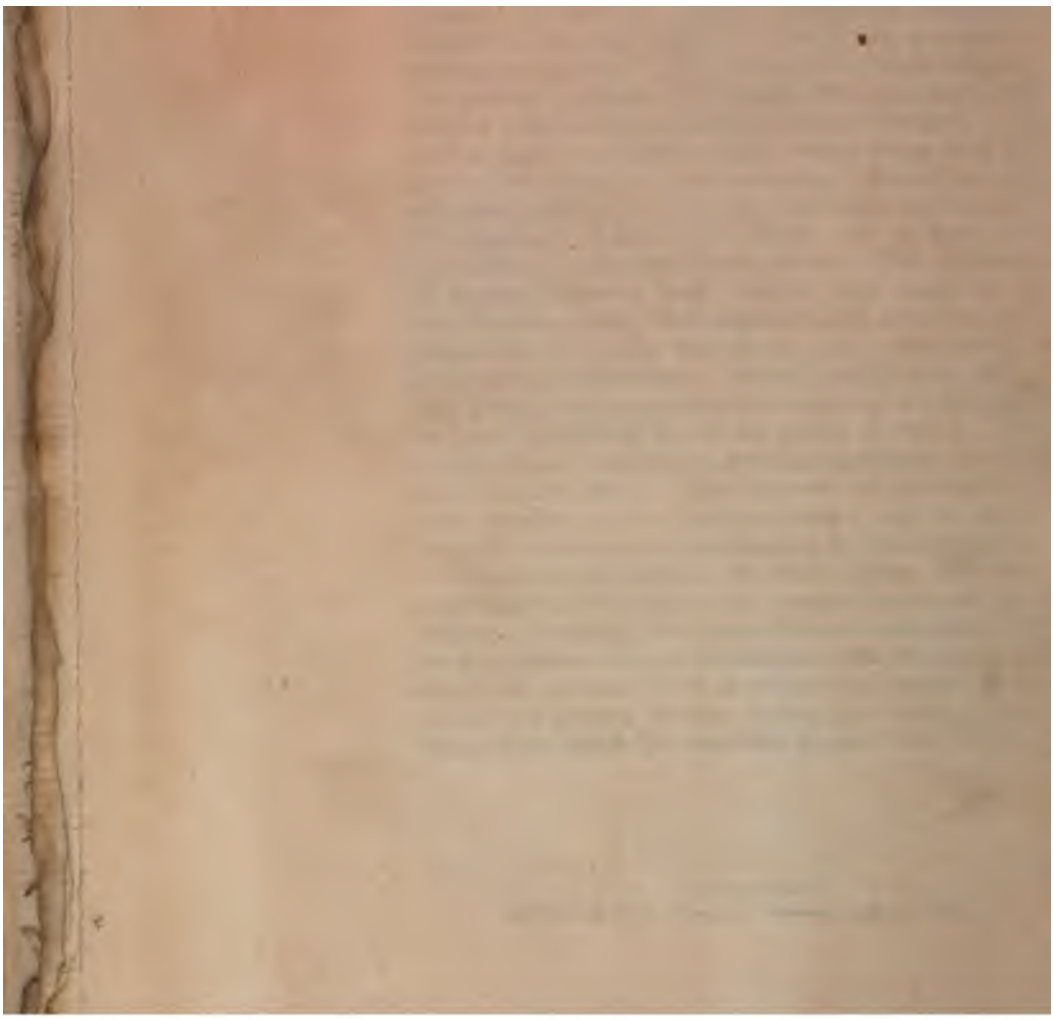

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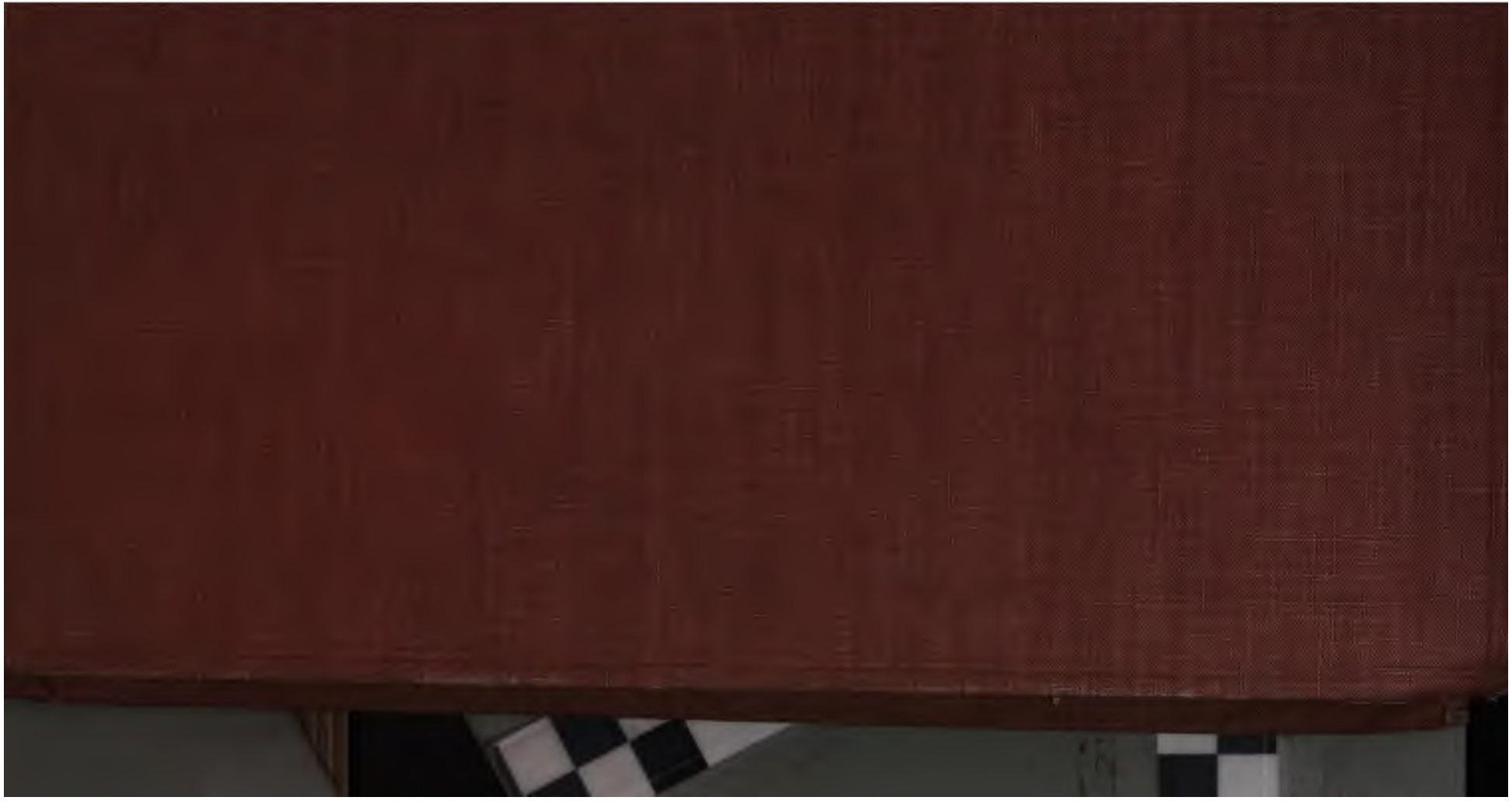
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